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THE LONGBEARD'S SAGA — Page 229

THE HEROES

OR

Greek Fairy Tales

FOR MY CHILDREN

BY

CHARLES KINGSLEY

Library Edition



NEW YORK:

THE PUBLISHERS PLATE RENTING CO.

TO
MY CHILDREN,
ROSE, MAURICE, AND MARY,
A LITTLE PRESENT OF
OLD GREEK FAIRY TALES.

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PREFACE.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

SOME of you have heard already of the old Greeks ; and all of you, as you grow up, will hear more and more of them. Those of you who are boys will, perhaps, spend a great deal of time in reading Greek books ; and the girls, though they may not learn Greek, will be sure to come across a great many stories taken from Greek history, and to see, I may say every day, things which we should not have had if it had not been for these old Greeks. You can hardly find a well-written book which has not in it Greek names, and words, and proverbs ; you cannot walk through a great town without passing Greek buildings ; you cannot go into a well-furnished room without seeing Greek statues and ornaments, even Greek patterns of furniture and paper ; so strangely have these old Greeks left their mark behind them upon this modern world in which we now live. And as you grow up, and read more and more, you will find that we owe to these old Greeks the beginnings of all our mathematics and geometry—that is, the science and knowledge of numbers, and of the shapes of things, and of the forces which make things move and stand at rest ; and the beginnings of our geography and astronomy ; and of our laws, and freedom, and politics—that is, the science of how to rule a country, and make it peaceful and strong. And we

PREFACE.

owe to them, too, the beginning of our logic—that is, the study of words and of reasoning ; and of our metaphysics—that is, the study of our own thoughts and souls. And last of all, they made their language so beautiful, that foreigners used to take to it instead of their own ; and at last Greek became the common language of educated people all over the old world, from Persia and Egypt even to Spain and Britain. And therefore it was that the New Testament was written in Greek, that it might be read and understood by all the nations of the Roman empire ; so that next to the Jews, and the Bible which the Jews handed down to us, we owe more to these old Greeks than to any people upon earth.

Now you must remember one thing, that “Greeks” was not their real name. They called themselves always “Hellenes,” but the Romans miscalled them Greeks ; and we have taken that wrong name from the Romans ; it would take a long time to tell you why. They were made up of many tribes and many small separate states ; and when you hear in this book of Minuiai, and Athenians, and other such names, you must remember that they were all different tribes and peoples of the one great Hellenic race, who lived in what we now call Greece, in the islands of the Archipelago, and along the coast of Asia Minor, (Ionia, as they call it,) from the Hellespont to Rhodes, and had afterwards colonies and cities in Sicily, and South Italy, (which was called Great Greece,) and along the shores of the Black Sea, at Sinope, and Kertch, and at Sebastopol. And after that, again, they spread under Alexander the Great, and conquered Egypt, and Syria, and Persia, and the whole East. But that was many a hundred years after my stories ; for then there were no Greeks on the Black Sea shores, nor in Sicily, or Italy, or anywhere but in Greece and in Ionia. And if you are puzzled by the names of places in this

book, you must take the maps and find them out. It will be a pleasanter way of learning geography than out of a dull lesson-book.

Now, I love these old Hellens heartily ; and I should be very ungrateful to them if I did not, considering all that they have taught me ; and they seem to me like brothers, though they have all been dead and gone many a hundred years ago. So as you must learn about them, whether you choose or not, I wish to be the first to introduce you to them, and to say, "Come hither, children, at this blessed Christmas time, when all God's creatures should rejoice together, and bless Him who redeemed them all. Come and see old friends of mine, whom I knew long ere you were born. They are come to visit us at Christmas, out of the world where all live to God ; and to tell you some of their old fairy-tales, which they loved when they were young like you."

For nations begin at first by being children like you, though they are made up of grown men. They are children at first like you—men and women with children's hearts ; frank, and affectionate, and full of trust, and teachable, and loving to see and learn all the wonders round them ; and greedy also, too often, and passionate and silly, as children are.

Thus these old Greeks were teachable, and learnt from all the nations round. From the Phœnicians they learnt ship-building, and some say letters beside ; and from the Assyrians they learnt painting, and carving, and building in wood and stone ; and from the Egyptians they learnt astronomy, and many things which you would not understand. In this they were like our own forefathers, the Northmen, of whom you love to hear, who, though they were wild and rough themselves, were humble, and glad to learn from every one. Therefore God rewarded these Greeks, as He rewarded our forefathers, and made them

wiser than the people who taught them, in everything they learnt ; for He loves to see men and children open-hearted, and willing to be taught ; and to him who uses what he has got, He gives more and more day by day. So these Greeks grew wise and powerful, and wrote poems which will live till the world's end, which you must read for yourselves some day, in English at least, if not in Greek. And they learnt to carve statues, and build temples, which are still among the wonders of the world ; and many another wondrous thing God taught them, for which we are the wiser this day.

For you must not fancy, children, that because these old Greeks were heathens, therefore God did not care for them, and taught them nothing.

The Bible tells us that it was not so, but that God's mercy is over all His works, and that He understands the hearts of all people, and fashions all their works. And St. Paul told these old Greeks in aftertimes, when they had grown wicked and fallen low, that they ought to have known better, because they were God's offspring, as their own poets had said ; and that the good God had put them where they were, to seek the Lord, and feel after him, and find him, though He was not far from any one of them. And Clement of Alexandria, a great Father of the Church, who was as wise as he was good, said that God had sent down Philosophy to the Greeks from heaven, as he sent down the Gospel to the Jews.

For Jesus Christ, remember, is the Light who lights every man who comes into the world. And no one can think a right thought, or feel a right feeling, or understand the real truth of anything in earth and heaven, unless the good Lord Jesus teaches him by his Spirit which gives understanding.

But these Greeks, as St. Paul told them, forgot what God had taught them, and though they were God's off-

spring, worshipped idols of wood and stone, and fell at last into sin and shame, and then, of course, into cowardice and slavery, till they perished out of that beautiful land which God had given them for so many years.

For, like all nations who have left anything behind them, beside mere mounds of earth, they believed at first in the One True God who made all heaven and earth. But after a while, like all other nations, they began to worship other gods, or rather angels and spirits, who (so they fancied) lived about their land. Zeus, the Father of gods and men, (who was some dim remembrance of the blessed true God,) and Hera his wife, and Phœbus Apollo the Sun-god, and Pallas Athene who taught men wisdom and useful arts, and Aphrodite the Queen of Beauty, and Poseidon the Ruler of the Sea, and Hephaistos the King of the Fire, who taught men to work in metals. And they honored the Gods of the Rivers, and the Nymph-maids, who they fancied lived in the caves, and the fountains, and the glens of the forest, and all beautiful wild places. And they honored the Erinnyes, the dreadful sisters, who, they thought, haunted guilty men until their sins were purged away. And many other dreams they had, which parted the One God into many; and they said, too, that these gods did things which would be a shame and sin for any man to do. And when their philosophers arose, and told them that God was One, they would not listen, but loved their idols, and their wicked idol feasts, till they all came to ruin. But we will talk of such sad things no more.

But, at the time of which this little book speaks, they had not fallen as low as that. They worshipped no idols, as far as I can find; and they still believed in the last six of the ten commandments, and knew well what was right and what was wrong. And they believed (and that was what gave them courage) that the gods loved men, and

taught them, and that without the gods men were sure to come to ruin. And in that they were right enough, as we know—more right even than they thought; for without God we can do nothing, and all wisdom comes from him.

Now, you must not think of them in this book as learned men, living in great cities, such as they were afterwards, when they wrought all their beautiful works, but as country people, living in farms and walled villages, in a simple, hard-working way; so that the greatest kings and heroes cooked their own meals, and thought it no shame, and made their own ships and weapons, and fed and harnessed their own horses; and the queens worked with their maid-servants, and did all the business of the house, and spun, and wove, and embroidered, and made their husbands' clothes and their own. So that a man was honored among them, not because he happened to be rich, but according to his skill, and his strength, and courage, and the number of things which he could do. For they were but grown-up children though they were right noble children too; and it was with them as it is now at school, the strongest and cleverest boy, though he be poor, leads all the rest.

Now, while they were young and simple they loved fairy tales, as you do now. All nations do so when they are young: our old forefathers did, and called their stories "Sagas." I will read you some of them some day—some of the Eddas, and the Voluspà, and Beowulf, and the noble old Romances. The old Arabs, again, had their tales, which we now call "The Arabian Nights." The old Romans had theirs, and they called them "Fabulæ," from which our word "fable" comes; but the old Hellens called theirs "Muthoi," from which our new word "myth" is taken. But next to those old Romances, which were written in the Christian middle age, there are no fairy tales like these old Greek ones, for

beauty, and wisdom, and truth, and for making children love noble deeds, and trust in God to help them through.

Now, why have I called this book "The Heroes?" Because that was the name which the Hellens gave to men who were brave and skilful, and do more than other men. At first, I think, that was all it meant: but after a time it came to mean something more; it came to mean men who helped their country; men in those old times, when the country was half wild, who killed fierce beasts and evil men, and drained swamps, and founded towns, and therefore after they were dead, were honored, because they had left their country better than they found it. And we call such a man a hero in English to this day, and call it a "heroic" thing to suffer pain and grief, that we may do good to our fellow-men. We may all do that, my children, boys and girls alike; and we ought to do it, for it is easier now than ever, and safer, and the path more clear. But you shall hear how the Hellens said their heroes worked, three thousand years ago. The stories are not all true, of course, nor half of them; you are not simple enough to fancy that: but the meaning of them is true, and true forever, and that is—"Do right, and God will help you."

FARLEY COURT,

Advent, 1855.

[I OWE an apology to the few scholars who may happen to read this hasty *jeu d'esprit*, for the inconsistent method in which I have spelt Greek names. The rule which I have tried to follow has been this: When the word has been hopelessly Latinized, as "Phœbus" has been, I have left it as it usually stands; but in other cases I have tried to keep the plain Greek spelling, except when it would have seemed pedantic, or when, as in the word "Tiphus," I should have given an altogether wrong notion of the sound of the word. It has been a choice of difficulties, which has been forced on me by our strange habit of introducing boys to the Greek myths, not in their original shape, but in a Roman disguise.]

STORY I.—PERSEUS.

PART I.

HOW PERSEUS AND HIS MOTHER CAME TO SERIPHOS.

ONCE upon a time there were two princes who were twins. Their names were Acrisius and Prætus, and they lived in the pleasant vale of Argos, far away in Hellas. They had fruitful meadows and vineyards, sheep and oxen, great herds of horses feeding down in Lerna Fen, and all that men could need to make them blest; and yet they were wretched, because they were jealous of each other. From the moment they were born they began to quarrel; and when they grew up, each tried to take away the other's share of the kingdom, and keep all for himself. So, first Acrisius drove out Prætus; and he went across the seas, and brought home a foreign princess for his wife, and foreign warriors to help him, who were called Cyclopes; and drove out Acrisius in his turn; and then they fought a long while up and down the land, till the quarrel was settled; and Acrisius took Argos and one half the land, and Prætus took Tiryns and the other half. And Prætus and his Cyclopes built around Tiryns great walls of unhewn stone, which are standing to this day.

But there came a prophet to that hard-hearted Acrisius, and prophesied against him, and said: "Because you have risen up against your own blood, your own blood

shall rise up against you ; because you have sinned against your kindred, by your kindred you shall be punished. Your daughter Danae shall bear a son, and by that son's hand you shall die. So the gods have ordained, and it will surely come to pass."

And at that, Acrisius was very much afraid ; but he did not mend his ways. He had been cruel to his own family ; and, instead of repenting and being kind to them, he went on to be more cruel than ever ; for he shut up his fair daughter Danae in a cavern underground, lined with brass, that no one might come near her. So he fancied himself more cunning than the gods ; but you will see presently whether he was able to escape them.

Now it came to pass that in time Danae bore a son ; so beautiful a babe that any but king Acrisius would have had pity on it. But he had no pity. For he took Danae and her babe down to the sea-shore, and put them into a great chest, and thrust them out to sea, for the winds and the waves to carry them whithersoever they would.

The northwest wind blew freshly out of the blue mountains, and down the pleasant vale of Argos, and away and out to sea. And away and out to sea before it, floated the mother and her babe, while all who watched them wept, save that cruel father, king Acrisius.

So they floated on and on, and the chest danced up and down upon the billows, and the baby slept upon its mother's breast ; but the poor mother could not sleep, but watched and wept, and she sang to her baby as they floated ; and the song which she sang you shall learn yourselves some day.

And now they are past the last blue headland, and in the open sea ; and there is nothing round them but the waves, and the sky, and the wind. But the waves are gentle, and the sky is clear, and the breeze is tender and low ; for these are the days when Halcyone and Ceyx build their

nests, and no storms ever ruffle the pleasant summer sea.

And who were Halcyone and Ceyx? You shall hear while the chest floats on. Halcyone was a fairy maiden, the daughter of the beach and of the wind. And she loved a sailor boy, and married him ; and none on earth were so happy as they. But at last Ceyx was wrecked ; and before he could swim to the shore, the billows swallowed him up. And Halcyone saw him drowning, and leapt into the sea to him ; but in vain. Then the Immortals took pity on them both, and changed them into two fair sea-birds ; and now they build a floating nest every year, and sail up and down happily forever, upon the pleasant seas of Greece.

So a night passed and a day ; and a long day it was for Danae ; and another night and day beside, till Danae was faint with hunger and weeping, and yet no land appeared. And all the while the babe slept quietly ; and at last poor Danae dropped her head and fell asleep likewise, with her cheek against her babe's.

After a while she awakened suddenly ; for the chest was jarring and grinding, and the air was full of sound. She looked up, and over her head were mighty cliffs, all red in the setting sun, and around her rocks and breakers, and flying flakes of foam. She clasped her hands together, and shrieked aloud for help. And when she cried, help met her ; for now there came over the rocks a tall and stately man, and looked down wondering upon poor Danae tossing about in the chest among the waves.

He wore a rough cloak of frieze, and on his head a broad hat to shade his face ; in his hand he carried a trident for a spearing fish, and over his shoulder was a casting-net ; but Danae could see that he was no common man by his stature, and his walk, and his flowing golden hair and beard ; and by the two servants who came behind him, carrying baskets for his fish. But she had

hardly time to look at him, before he had laid aside his trident, and leapt down the rocks, and thrown his casting-net so surely over Danae and the chest, that he drew it, and her, and the baby, safe upon a ledge of rock.

Then the fisherman took Danae by the hand, and lifted her out of the chest, and said :—

“O, beautiful damsel, what strange chance has brought you to this island in so frail a ship? Who are you, and whence? Surely you are some king’s daughter; and this boy has somewhat more than mortal.”

And as he spoke, he pointed to the babe; for its face shone like the morning star.

But Danae only held down her head, and sobbed out :—

“Tell me to what land I have come, unhappy that I am; and among what men I have fallen?”

And he said: “This isle is called Seriphos, and I am a Hellen, and dwell in it. I am the brother of Polydectes the king; and men call me Dictys the netter, because I catch the fish of the shore.”

Then Danae fell down at his feet, and embraced his knees, and cried :—

“Oh, Sir, have pity upon a stranger, whom a cruel doom has driven to your land; and let me live in your house as a servant; but treat me honorably, for I was once a king’s daughter, and this my boy (as you have truly said) is of no common race. I will not be a charge to you, or eat the bread of idleness; for I am more skilful in weaving and embroidery, than all the maidens of my land.”

And she was going on; but Dictys stopped her, and raised her up, and said :

“My daughter, I am old, and my hairs are growing gray; while I have no children to make my home cheerful. Come with me, then, and you shall be a daughter

to me and to my wife, and this babe shall be our grand-child. For I fear the gods, and show hospitality to all strangers ; knowing that good deeds, like evil ones, always return to those who do them."

So Danae was comforted, and went home with Dictys the good fisherman, and was a daughter to him and to his wife, till fifteen years were past.

PART II.

HOW PERSEUS VOWED A RASH VOW.

FIFTEEN years were past and gone, and the babe was now grown to be a tall lad and a sailor, and went many voyages after merchandise to the islands round. His mother called him Perseus : but all the people in Seriphos said that he was not the son of mortal man, and called him the son of Zeus, the king of the Immortals. For though he was but fifteen, he was taller by a head than any man in the island ; and he was the most skilful of all in running and wrestling and boxing, and in throwing the quoit and the javelin, and in rowing with the oar, and in playing on the harp, and in all which befits a man. And he was brave and truthful, gentle and courteous, for good old Dictys had trained him well ; and well it was for Perseus that he had done so. For now Danae and her son fell into great danger, and Perseus had need of all his wit to defend his mother and himself.

I said that Dictys's brother was Polydectes, king of the island. He was not a righteous man, like Dictys : but greedy, and cunning, and cruel. And when he saw fair Danae, he wanted to marry her. But she would not ; for she did not love him, and cared for no one but her boy, and her boy's father, whom she never hoped to see again. At last Polydectes became furious ; and while Perseus was away at sea, he took poor Danae away from Dictys, saying, "If you will not be my wife, you shall be my slave." So Danae was made a slave, and had to fetch water from the well, and grind in the mill, and

perhaps was beaten, and wore a heavy chain, because she would not marry that cruel king. But Perseus was far away over the seas in the isle of Samos, little thinking how his mother was languishing in grief.

Now one day at Samos, while the ship was lading, Perseus wandered into a pleasant wood to get out of the sun, and sat down on the turf, and fell asleep. And as he slept, a strange dream came to him; the strangest dream which he had ever had in his life.

There came a lady to him through the wood, taller than he, or any mortal man : but beautiful exceedingly, with great gray eyes, clear and piercing, but strangely soft and mild. On her head was a helmet, and in her hand a spear. And over her shoulder, above her long blue robes, hung a goatskin, which bore up a mighty shield of brass, polished like a mirror. She stood and looked at him with her clear gray eyes ; and Perseus saw that her eyelids never moved, nor her eyeballs, but looked straight through and through him, and into his very heart, as if she could see all the secrets of his soul, and knew all that he had ever thought or longed for since the day that he was born. And Perseus dropped his eyes, trembling and blushing, as the wonderful lady spoke.

“Perseus, you must do an errand for me.”

“Who are you, lady? And how do you know my name?”

“I am Pallas Athené ; and I know the thoughts of all men’s hearts, and discern their manhood or their baseness. And from the souls of clay I turn away ; and they are blest, but not by me. They fatten at ease, like sheep in the pasture, and eat what they did not sow, like oxen in the stall. They grow and spread, like the gourd, along the ground : but like the gourd, they give no shade to the traveller ; and when they are ripe death gathers them,

and they go down unloved into hell, and their name vanishes out of the land.

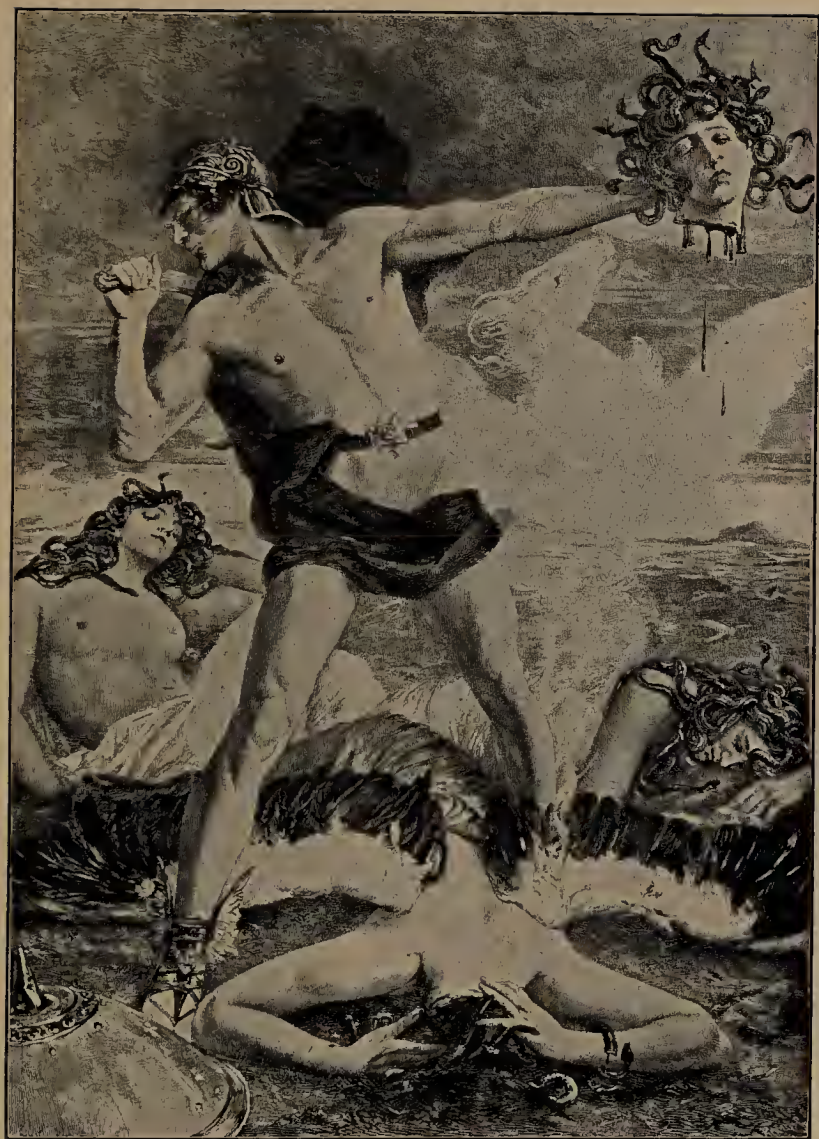
“But to the souls of fire I give more fire, and to those who are manful I give a might more than man’s. These are the heroes, the sons of the Immortals, who are blest, but not like the souls of clay. For I drive them forth by strange paths, Perseus, that they may fight the Titans and the monsters, the enemies of Gods and men. Through doubt and need, danger and battle, I drive them; and some of them are slain in the flower of youth, no man knows when or where; and some of them win noble names, and a fair and green old age; but what will be their latter end I know not, and none, save Zeus, the father of Gods and men. Tell me now, Perseus, which of these two sorts of men seem to you more blest?”

Then Perseus answered, boldly: “Better to die in the flower of youth, on the chance of winning a noble name, than to live at ease like the sheep, and die unloved and unrenowned.”

Then that strange lady laughed, and held up her brazen shield, and cried: “See here, Perseus; dare you face such a monster as this, and slay it, that I may place its head upon this shield?”

And in the mirror of the shield there appeared a face, and as Perseus looked on it his blood ran cold. It was the face of a beautiful woman; but her cheeks were pale as death, and her brows were knit with everlasting pain, and her lips were thin and bitter like a snake’s; and instead of hair, vipers wreathed about her temples, and shot out their forked tongues; while round her head were folded wings like an eagle’s, and upon her bosom claws of brass.

And Perseus looked awhile, and then said: “If there is anything so fierce and foul on earth, it were a noble deed to kill it. Where can I find the monster?”



PERSEUS CUTS OFF THE HEAD OF MEDUSA — Page 22

Then the strange lady smiled again, and said : "Not yet; you are too young, and too unskilled; for this is Medusa the Gorgon, the mother of a monstrous brood. Return to your home, and do the work which waits there for you. You must play the man in that before I can think you worthy to go in search of the Gorgon."

Then Perseus would have spoken, but the strange lady vanished and he awoke; and behold, it was a dream. But day and night Perseus saw before him the face of that dreadful woman, with the vipers writhing round her head.

So he returned home; and when he came to Seriphos, the first thing which he heard was that his mother was a slave in the house of Polydectes.

Grinding his teeth with rage, he went out, and away to the king's palace, and through the men's rooms, and the women's rooms, and so through all the house, (for no one dared to stop him, so terrible and fair was he), till he found his mother sitting on the floor, turning the stone hand-mill, and weeping as she turned it. And he lifted her up, and kissed her, and bade her follow him forth. But before they could pass out of the room, Polydectes came in, raging. And when Perseus saw him, he flew upon him as the mastiff flies on the boar. "Villain and tyrant!" he cried; "is this your respect for the Gods, and thy mercy to strangers and widows? You shall die!" And because he had no sword, he caught up the stone hand-mill, and he lifted it to dash out Polydectes's brains.

But his mother clung to him, shrieking, "Oh, my son, we are strangers, and helpless in the land; and if you kill the king, all the people will fall on us, and we shall both die."

Good Dictys, too, who had come in, entreated him. "Remember that he is my brother. Remember how I

have brought you up, and trained you as my own son, and spare him for my sake."

Then Perseus lowered his hand ; and Polydectes, who had been trembling all this while like a coward, because he knew that he was in the wrong, let Perseus and his mother pass.

Perseus took his mother to the temple of Athené, and there the priestess made her one of the temple-sweepers ; for there they knew she would be safe, and not even Polydectes would dare to drag her away from the altar. And there Perseus, and the good Dictys, and his wife, came to visit her every day ; while Polydectes, not being able to get what he wanted by force, cast about in his wicked heart how he might get it by cunning.

Now he was sure that he could never get back Danae as long as Perseus was in the island ; so he made a plot to rid himself of him. And first he pretended to have forgiven Perseus, and to have forgotten Danae ; so that, for a while, all went as smoothly as ever.

Next he proclaimed a great feast, and invited to it all the chiefs, and land-owners, and the young men of the island, among them Perseus, that they might all do him homage as their king, and eat of his banquet in his hall.

On the appointed day they all came ; and, as the custom was then, each guest brought his present with him to the king : one a horse, another a shawl, or a ring, or a sword ; and those who had nothing better brought a basket of grapes, or of game ; but Perseus brought nothing, for he had nothing to bring, being but a poor sailor-lad.

He was ashamed, however, to go into the king's presence without his gift, and he was too proud to ask Dictys to lend him one. So he stood at the door sorrowfully, watching the rich men go in ; and his face grew very red as they pointed at him, and smiled, and whispered, "What has that foundling to give?"

Now, this was what Polydectes wanted ; and as soon as he heard that Perseus stood without, he bade them bring him in, and asked him scornfully before them all, —“Am I not your king, Perseus, and have I not invited you to my feast? Where is your present, then?”

Perseus blushed and stammered, while all the proud men round laughed, and some of them began jeering him openly. “This fellow was thrown ashore here like a piece of weed or drift-wood, and yet he is too proud to bring a gift to the king.”

“And though he does not know who his father is, he is vain enough to let the old women call him the son of Zeus.”

And so forth, till poor Perseus grew mad with shame, and hardly knowing what he said, cried out,—“A present! who are you who talk of presents? See if I do not bring a nobler one than all of yours together!”

So he said, boasting ; and yet he felt in his heart that he was braver than all those scoffers, and more able to do some glorious deed.

“Hear him! Hear the boaster! What is it to be?” cried they all, laughing louder than ever.

Then his dream at Samos came into his mind, and he cried aloud, “The head of the Gorgon.”

He was half afraid after he had said the words ; for all laughed louder than ever, and Polydectes loudest of all.

“You have promised to bring me the Gorgon’s head? Then never appear again in this island without it. Go!”

Perseus ground his teeth with rage, for he saw that he had fallen into a trap ; but his promise lay upon him, and he went out without a word.

Down to the cliffs he went, and looked across the broad blue sea ; and he wondered if his dream were true, and prayed in the bitterness of his soul.

“Pallas Athené, was my dream true? and shall I slay

the Gorgon? If thou didst really show me her face, let me not come to shame as a liar and boastful. Rashly and angrily I promised : but cunningly and patiently will I perform."

But there was no answer, nor sign ; neither thunder or any appearance ; not even a cloud in the sky.

And three times Perseus called weeping. "Rashly and angrily I promised : but cunningly and patiently will I perform."

Then he saw afar off above the sea a small white cloud, as bright as silver. And it came on, nearer and nearer, till its brightness dazzled his eyes.

Perseus wondered at that strange cloud, for there was no other cloud all round the sky ; and he trembled as it touched the cliff below. And as it touched, it broke, and parted, and within it appeared Pallas Athené, as he had seen her at Samos in his dream, and beside her a young man more light-limbed than the stag, whose eyes were like sparks of fire. By his side was a scimitar of diamond, all of one clear precious stone, and on his feet were golden sandals, from the heels of which grew living wings.

They looked upon Perseus keenly, and yet they never moved their eyes ; and they came up the cliffs towards him more swiftly than the sea-gull, and yet they never moved their feet, nor did the breeze stir the robes about their limbs ; only the wings of the youth's sandals quivered like a hawk's when he hangs above the cliff. And Perseus fell down and worshipped, for he knew that they were more than man.

But Athené stood before him and spoke gently, and bid him have no fear. Then—

"Perseus," she said, "he who overcomes in one trial merits thereby a sharper trial still. You have braved

Polydectes, and done manfully. Dare you brave Medusa the Gorgon?"

And Perseus said, "Try me; for since you spoke to me in Samos, a new soul has come into my breast, and I should be ashamed not to dare anything which I can do. Show me, then, how I can do this."

"Perseus," said Athené, "think well before you attempt; for this deed requires a seven years' journey, in which you cannot repent or turn back, nor escape; but if your heart fails you, you must die in the unshapen land, where no man will ever find your bones."

"Better so than live here, useless and despised," said Perseus. "Tell me, then, oh tell me, fair and wise Goddess, of your great kindness and condescension, how I can do but this one thing, and then, it need be, die!"

Then Athené smiled and said,—

"Be patient, and listen; for it you forget my words, you will indeed die. You must go northward to the country of the Hyperboreans, who live beyond the pole, at the sources of the cold north wind; till you find the three Gray Sisters, who have but one eye and one tooth between them. You must ask them the way to the Nymphs, the daughters of the Evening Star, who dance about the golden tree, in the Atlantic island of the west. They will tell you the way to the Gorgon, that you may slay her, my enemy, the mother of monstrous beasts. Once she was a maiden as beautiful as morn, till in her pride she sinned a sin at which the sun hid his face; and from that day her hair was turned to vipers, and her hands to eagle's claws; and her heart was filled with shame and rage, and her lips with bitter venom; and her eyes became so terrible that whosoever looks on them is turned to stone; and her children are the winged horse, and the giant of the golden sword; and her grandchildren are Echidna the witchadder, and Geryon the

three-headed tyrant, who feeds his herds beside the herds of hell. So she became the sister of the Gorgons, Stheino and Euryte the abhorred, the daughters of the Queen of the Sea. Touch them not, for they are immortal : but bring me only Medusa's head."

"And I will bring it!" said Perseus; "but how am I to escape her eyes? Will she not freeze me too into stone?"

"You shall take this polished shield," said Athené; "and when you come near her look not at her herself, but at her image in the brass; so you may strike her safely. And when you have struck off her head, wrap it, with your face turned away, in the folds of the goat-skin on which the shield hangs, the hide of Amaltheié, the nurse of the Ægis-holder. So you will bring it safely back to me, and win to yourself renown and a place among the heroes who feast with the immortals upon the peak where no winds blow."

Then Perseus said, "I will go, though I die in going. But how shall I cross the seas without a ship? And who will show me my way? And when I find her, how shall I slay her, if her scales be iron and brass?"

Then the young man spoke: "These sandals of mine will bear you across the seas, and over hill and dale like a bird, as they bear me all day long; for I am Hermes, the far-famed Argus-slayer, the messenger of the Immortals who dwell on Olympus."

Then Perseus fell down and worshipped, while the young man spoke again.

"The sandals themselves will guide you on the road, for they are divine and cannot stray; and this sword itself, the Argus-slayer, will kill her, for it is divine, and needs no second stroke. Arise, and gird them on, and go forth."

So Perseus arose, and girded on the sandals and the sword.

And Athené cried, "Now leap from the cliff, and be gone."

But Perseus lingered.

"May I not bid farewell to my mother and to Dictys? And may I not offer burnt-offerings to you, and to Hermes, the far-famed Argus-slayer, and to Father Zeus above?"

"You shall not bid farewell to your mother, lest your heart relent at her weeping. I will comfort her and Dictys until you return in peace. Nor shall you offer burnt-offerings to the Olympians; for your offering shall be Medusa's head. Leap, and trust in the armor of the Immortals."

Then Perseus looked down the cliff and shuddered; but he was ashamed to show his dread. Then he thought of Medusa and the renown before him, and he leaped into the empty air.

And behold, instead of falling he floated, and stood, and ran along the sky. He looked back, but Athené had vanished, and Hermes; and the sandals led him on northward ever, like a crane who follows the spring toward the Ister fens.'

PART III.

HOW PERSEUS SLEW THE GORGON.

So Perseus started on his journey, going dry-shod over land and sea ; and his heart was high and joyful, for the winged sandals bore him each day a seven days' journey.

And he went by Cythnus, and by Ceos, and the pleasant Cyclades to Attica ; and past Athens, and Thebes, and the Copaic lake, and up the vale of Cephissus, and past the peaks of Cæta and Pindus, and over the rich Thessalian plains, till the sunny hills of Greece were behind him, and before him were the wilds of the north. Then he passed the Thracian mountains, and many a barbarous tribe, Pæons and Dardans and Triballi, till he came to the Ister stream, and the dreary Scythian plains. And he walked across the Ister dry-shod, and away through the moors and fens, day and night toward the bleak northwest, turning neither to the right hand nor the left, till he came to the Unshapen Land, and the place which has no name.

And seven days he walked through it, on a path which few can tell ; for those who have trodden it like least to speak of it, and those who go there again in dreams are glad enough when they awake ; till he came to the edge of the everlasting night, where the air was full of feathers, and the soil was hard with ice ; and there at last he found the three Gray Sisters, by the shore of the freezing sea, nodding upon a white log of drift wood, beneath the cold white winter moon ; and they chanted a low song together. "Why the old times were better than the new."

There was no living thing around them, not a fly, not a moss upon the rocks. Neither seal nor sea-gull dare come near, lest the ice should clutch them in its claws. The surge broke up in foam, but it fell again in flakes of snow ; and it frosted the hair of the three Gray Sisters, and the bones in the ice-cliff above their heads. They passed the eye from one to the other, but for all that they could not see ; and they passed the tooth from one to the other, but for all that they could not eat ; and they sat in the full glare of the moon, but they were none the warmer for her beams. And Perseus pitied the three Gray Sisters ; but they did not pity themselves.

So he said, "Oh venerable mothers, wisdom is the daughter of old age. You therefore should know many things. Tell me, if you can, the path to the Gorgon."

Then one cried, "Who is this who reproaches us with old age?" And another, "This is the voice of one of the children of men."

And he, "I do not reproach, but honor your old age, and I am one of the sons of men and of the heroes. The rulers of Olympus have sent me to you to ask the way to the Gorgon."

Then one—"There are new rulers in Olympus, and all new things are bad." And another—"We hate your rulers, and the heroes, and all the children of men. We are the kindred of the Titans, and the Giants, and the Gorgons, and the ancient monsters of the deep." And another—"Who is this rash and insolent man, who pushes unbidden into our world?" And the first—"There never was such a world as ours, nor will be ; if we let him see it, he will spoil it all."

Then one cried,— "Give me the eye, that I may see him ;" and another, "Give me the tooth, that I may bite him." But Perseus, when he saw that they were foolish and proud, and did not love the children of men, left off

pitying them, and said to himself, "Hungry men must needs be hasty; if I stay making many words here, I shall be starved." Then he stepped close to them, and watched till they passed the eye from hand to hand. And as they groped about between themselves, he held out his own hand gently, till one of them put the eye into it, fancying that it was the hand of her sister. Then he sprang back, and laughed, and cried—

"Cruel and proud old women, I have your eye; and I will throw it into the sea, unless you tell me the path to the Gorgon, and swear to me that you tell me right."

Then they wept, and chattered, and scolded; but in vain. They were forced to tell the truth, though when they told it, Perseus could hardly make out the road.

"You must go," they said, "foolish boy, to the southward, into the ugly glare of the sun, till you come to Atlas the Giant, who holds the heaven and the earth apart. And you must ask his daughters, the Hesperides, who are young and foolish like yourself. And now give us back our eye; for we have forgotten all the rest."

So Perseus gave them back their eye; but instead of using it, they nodded and fell fast asleep, and were turned into blocks of ice, till the tide came up and washed them all away. And now they float up and down like icebergs forever, weeping whenever they meet the sunshine, and the fruitful summer, and the warm south wind, which fill young hearts with joy.

But Perseus leaped away to the southward, leaving the snow and the ice behind; past the isle of the Hyperbo-reans, and the tin isles, and the long Iberian shore; while the sun rose higher day by day upon a bright blue summer sea. And the terns and the sea-gulls swept laughing round his head, and called to him to stop and play, and the dolphins gambolled up as he passed, and offered to carry him on their backs. And all night long the sea-

nymphs sang sweetly, and the Tritons blew upon their conchs, as they played round Galatæa their queen, in her car of pearled shells. Day by day the sun rose higher, and leaped more swiftly into the sea at night, and more swiftly out of the sea at dawn ; while Perseus skimmed over the billows like a sea-gull, and his feet were never wetted ; and leapt on from wave to wave, and his limbs were never weary, till he saw far away a mighty mountain, all rose-red in the setting sun. Its feet were wrapped in forests, and its head in wreaths of cloud ; and Perseus knew that it was Atlas, who holds the heavens and the earth apart.

He came to the mountain, and leapt on shore, and wandered upward among pleasant valleys and waterfalls, and tall trees and strange ferns and flowers ; but there was no smoke rising from any glen, nor house, nor sign of man.

At last he heard sweet voices singing ; and he guessed that he was come to the garden of the Nymphs, the daughters of the Evening Star.

They sang like nightingales among the thickets, and Perseus stopped to hear their song ; but the words which they spoke he could not understand ; no, nor no man after him for many a hundred years. So he stepped forward and saw them dancing, hand in hand around the charmed tree, which bent under its golden fruit ; and round the tree-foot was coiled the dragon, old Ladon the sleepless snake, who lies there forever, listening to the song of the maidens, blinking and watching with dry bright eyes.

Then Perseus stopped, not because he feared the dragon, but because he was bashful before those fair maids ; but when they saw him, they too stopped, and called to him with trembling voices,—

“Who are you? Are you Heracles the mighty, who

will come to rob our garden, and carry off our golden fruit?" And he answered :

"I am not Heracles the mighty, and I want none of your golden fruit. Tell me, fair nymphs, the way which leads to the Gorgon, that I may go on my way and slay her."

"Not yet, not yet, fair boy ; come dance with us around the tree, in the garden which knows no winter, the home of the south wind and the sun. Come hither and play with us awhile ; we have danced alone here for a thousand years, and our hearts are weary with longing for a play-fellow. So come, come, come !"

"I cannot dance with you, fair maidens, for I must do the errand of the Immortals. So tell me the way to the Gorgon, lest I wander and perish in the waves."

Then they sighed and wept ; and answered :—

"The Gorgon ! she will freeze you into stone."

"It is better to die like a hero than to live like an ox in a stall. The Immortals have lent me weapons, and they will give me wit to use them."

Then they sighed again and answered : Fair boy, if you are bent on your own ruin, be it so. We know not the way to the Gorgon ; but we will ask the giant Atlas, above upon the mountain peak, the brother of our father, the silver Evening Star. He sits aloft, and sees across the ocean, and far away into the Unshapen Land."

So they went up the mountain to Atlas, their uncle, and Perseus went up with them. And they found the giant kneeling, as he held the heavens and the earth apart.

They asked him, and he answered mildly, pointing to the sea-board with his mighty hand : "I can see the Gorgons lying on an island far away, but this youth can never come near them, unless he has the hat of darkness, which whosoever wears cannot be seen."

Then cried Perseus, "Where is that hat, that I may find it?"

But the giant smiled. "No living mortal can find that hat, for it lies in the depths of Hades, in the regions of the dead. But my nieces are immortal, and they shall fetch it for you, if you will promise me one thing and keep your faith."

Then Perseus promised; and the giant said: "When you come back with the head of Medusa, you shall show me the beautiful horror; that I may lose my feeling and my breathing, and become stone forever; for it is weary labor for me to hold the heavens and the earth apart."

Then Perseus promised; and the eldest of the nymphs went down, and into a dark cavern among the cliffs, out of which came smoke and thunder, for it was one of the mouths of Hell.

And Perseus and the nymphs sat down seven days, and waited trembling, till the nymph came up again; and her face was pale, and her eyes dazzled with the light, for she had been long in the dreary darkness; but in her hand was the magic hat.

Then all the nymphs kissed Perseus, and wept over him a long while; but he was only impatient to be gone. And at last they put the hat upon his head, and he vanished out of their sight.

But Perseus went on boldly, past many an ugly sight, far away into the heart of the Unshapen Land, beyond the streams of Ocean, to the isles where no ship cruises, where is neither night nor day, where nothing is in its right place, and nothing has a name; till he heard the rustle of the Gorgons' wings, and saw the glitter of their brazen talons; and then he knew that it was time to halt, lest Medusa should freeze him into stone.

He thought awhile with himself, and remembered Athené's words. He rose aloft into the air, and held the

mirror of the shield above his head, and looked up into it that he might see all that was below him.

And he saw the three Gorgons sleeping, as huge as elephants. He knew that they could not see him, because the hat of darkness hid him ; and yet he trembled as he sank down near them, so terrible were those brazen claws.

Two of the Gorgons were foul as swine, and lay sleeping heavily, as swine sleep, with their mighty wings outspread ; but Medusa tossed to and fro restlessly, and as she tossed, Perseus pitied her, she looked so fair and sad. Her plumage was like the rainbow, and her face was like the face of a nymph, only her eyebrows were knit, and her lips clenched, with everlasting care and pain ; and her long neck gleamed so white in the mirror, that Perseus had not the heart to strike, and said : “ Ah, that it had been either of her sisters ! ”

But as he looked, from among her tresses the vipers' heads awoke, and peeped up with their bright dry eyes, and showed their fangs, and hissed ; and Medusa, as she tossed, threw back her wings, and showed her brazen claws ; and Perseus saw that, for all her beauty, she was as foul and venomous as the rest.

Then he came down and stepped to her boldly, and looked steadfastly on his mirror, and struck with Herpé stoutly once ; and he did not need to strike again.

Then he wrapped the head in the goat-skin, turning away his eyes, and sprang into the air aloft, faster than he ever sprang before.

For Medusa's wings and talons rattled as she sank dead upon the rocks ; and her two foul sisters woke, and saw her lying dead.

Into the air they sprang, yelling, and looking for him who had done the deed. Thrice they swung round and round, like hawks who beat for a partridge ; and thrice they snuffed round and round, like hounds

who draw upon a deer. At last they struck upon the scent of the blood, and they checked for a moment to make sure ; and then on they rushed with a fearful howl, while the wind rattled hoarse in their wings.

On they rushed, sweeping and flapping, like eagles after a hare ; and Perseus's blood ran cold, for all his courage, as he saw them come howling on his track ; and he cried : " Bear me well now, brave sandals, for the hounds of death are at my heels ! "

And well the brave sandals bore him, aloft through cloud and sunshine, across the shoreless sea ; and fast followed the hounds of Death, as the roar of their wings came down the wind. But the roar came down fainter and fainter, and the howl of their voices died away ; for the sandals were too swift, even for Gorgons, and by nightfall they were far behind, two black specks in the southern sky, till the sun sank, and he saw them no more.

Then he came again to Atlas, and the garden of the Nymphs ; and when the giant heard him coming, he groaned, and said : " Fulfil thy promise to me." Then Perseus held up to him the Gorgon's head, and he had rest from all his toil ; for he became a crag of stone, which sleeps forever far above the clouds.

Then he thanked the Nymphs, and asked them : " By what road shall I go homeward again, for I wandered far round in coming hither ! "

And they wept and cried : " Go home no more, but stay and play with us, the lonely maidens, who dwell forever far away from gods and men."

But he refused, and they told him his road and said : " Take with you this magic fruit, which, if you eat once, you will not hunger for seven days. For you must go eastward and eastward ever, over the doleful Lybian shore, which Poseidon gave to Father Zeus, when he burst open the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, and drowned the fair

Lectonian land. And Zeus took that land in exchange, a fair bargain, much bad ground for a little good, and to this day it lies waste and desert, with shingle, and rock, and sand."

Then they kissed Perseus, and wept over him, and he leapt down the mountain, and went on, lessening and lessening like a sea-gull, away and out to sea.

PART IV.

HOW PERSEUS CAME TO THE ÆTHIOPS.

So Perseus flitted onward to the northeast over many a league of sea, till he came to the rolling sand-hills, and the dreary Lybian shore.

And he flitted on across the desert, over rock-ledges, and banks of shingle, and level wastes of sand, and shell-drifts bleaching in the sunshine, and the skeletons of great sea-monsters, and dead bones of ancient giants strewn up and down upon the old sea-floor. And as he went, the blood-drops fell to the earth from the Gorgon's head, and became poisonous asps and adders, which breed in the desert to this day.

Over the sands he went, he never knew how far or how long, feeding on the fruit which the Nymphs had given him, till he saw the hills of the *Psylli*, and the Dwarfs who fought with cranes. Their spears were of reeds and rushes, and their houses of the egg-shells of the cranes; and Perseus laughed, and went his way to the northeast, hoping all day long to see the blue Mediterranean sparkling, that he might fly across it to his home.

But now came down a mighty wind, and swept him back southward toward the desert. All day long he strove against it; but even the winged sandals could not prevail. So he was forced to float down the wind all night; and when the morning dawned there was nothing to be seen, save the same old hateful waste of sand.

And out of the north the sand-storms rushed upon him,

blood-red pillars and wreaths, blotting out the noonday sun ; and Perseus fled before them, lest he should be choked by the burning dust. At last the gale fell calm, and he tried to go northward again ; but again came down the sand-storms, and swept him back into the waste, and then all was calm and cloudless as before. Seven days he strove against the storms, and seven days he was driven back, till he was spent with thirst and hunger, and his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth. Here and there he fancied that he saw a fair lake, and the sunbeams shining on the water ; but when he came to it it vanished at his feet, and there was nought but burning sand. And if he had not been of the race of the Immortals, he would have perished in the waste ; but his life was strong within him, because it was more than man's.

Then he cried to Athené, and said,—

“Oh, fair and pure, if thou hearest me, wilt thou leave me here to die of drought? I have brought thee the Gorgon's head at thy bidding, and hitherto thou hast prospered my journey ; dost thou desert me at the last? Else why will not these immortal sandals prevail, even against the desert storms? Shall I never see my mother more, and the blue ripple round Scirphos, and the sunny hills of Hellas?”

So he prayed ; and after he had prayed there was a great silence.

The heaven was still above his head, and the sand was still beneath his feet ; and Perseus looked up, but there was nothing but the blinding sun in the blinding blue ; and round him, but there was nothing but the blinding sand.

And Perseus stood still awhile, and waited, and said—
“Surely I am not here without the will of the Immortals, for Athené will not lie. Were not these sandals to lead

me in the right road? Then the road in which I have tried to go must be a wrong road."

Then suddenly his ears were opened, and he heard the sound of running water.

And at that his heart was lifted up, though he scarcely dare believe his ears; and weary as he was, he hurried forward though he could scarcely stand upright; and within a bowshot of him was a glen in the sand, and marble rocks, and date-trees, and a lawn of gay green grass. And through the lawn a streamlet sparkled and wandered out beyond the trees, and vanished in the sand.

The water trickled among the rocks, and a pleasant breeze rustled in the dry date-branches; and Perseus laughed for joy, and leapt down the cliff, and drank of the cool water, and ate of the dates, and slept upon the turf, and leapt up and went forward again; but not toward the north this time; for he said—"Surely Athené has sent me hither, and will not have me go homeward. yet. What, if there be another noble deed to be done, before I see the sunny hills of Hellas?"

So he went east, and east forever, by fresh oases and fountains, date-palms, and lawns of grass, till he saw before him a mighty mountain-wall, all rose-red in the setting sun.

Then he towered in the air like an eagle, for his limbs were strong again; and he flew all night across the mountain till the day began to dawn, and rosy-fingered Eos came blushing up the sky. And then, behold, beneath him was the long green garden of Egypt, and the shining stream of Nile.

And he saw cities walled up to heaven, and temples, and obelisks, and pyramids, and giant gods of stone. And he came down amid fields of barley, and flax, and millet, and clambering gourds; and saw the people

coming out of the gates of a great city, and setting to work, each in his place, among the water courses, parting the streams among the plants cunningly with their feet, according to the wisdom of the Egyptians. But when they saw him they all stopped their work, and gathered round him, and cried,—

“Who art thou, fair youth? and what bearest thou beneath thy goat-skin there? Surely thou art one of the Immortals; for thy skin is white like ivory, and ours is red like clay. Thy hair is like threads of gold, and ours is black and curled. Surely thou art one of the Immortals;”—and they would have worshipped him then and there; but Perseus said,—

“I am not one of the Immortals; but I am a hero of the Hellens. And I have slain the Gorgon in the wilderness, and bear her head with me. Give me food, therefore, that I may go forward and finish my work.”

Then they gave him food, and fruit, and wine; but they would not let him go. And when the news came into the city that the Gorgon was slain, the priests came out to meet him, and the maidens, with songs and dances, and timbrels and harps; and they would have brought him to their temple and to their king; but Perseus put on the hat of darkness, and vanished away out of their sight.

Therefore the Egyptians looked long for his return, but in vain, and worshipped him as a hero, and made a statue of him, in Chemmis, which stood for many a hundred years; and they said that he appeared to them at times, with sandals a cubit long; and that whenever he appeared the season was fruitful, and the Nile rose high that year.

Then Perseus went to the eastward, along the Red Sea shore; and then, because he was afraid to go into the Arabian deserts, he turned northward once more, and this time no storm hindered him.

He went past the Isthmus, and Mount Casius, and the vast Serbonian bog, and up the shore of Palestine, where the dark-faced Æthiops dwelt.

He flew on past pleasant hills and valleys, like Argos itself, or Lacedæmon, or the fair Vale of Tempe. But the lowlands were all drowned by floods, and the highlands blasted by fire, and the hills heaved like a bubbling cauldron, before the wrath of King Poseidon, the shaker of the earth.

And Perseus feared to go inland, but flew along the shore above the sea ; and he went on all the day, and the sky was black with smoke ; and he went on all the night, and the sky was red with flame.

And at the dawn of day he looked toward the cliffs ; and at the water's edge, under a black rock, he saw a white image stand.

"This," thought he, "must surely be the statue of some sea-God ; I will go near and see what kind of Gods these barbarians worship."

So he came near ; but when he came, it was no statue, but a maiden of flesh and blood ; for he could see her tresses streaming in the breeze ; and as he came closer still, he could see how she shrank and shivered, when the waves sprinkled her with cold salt spray. Her arms were spread above her head, and fastened to the rock with chains of brass ; and her head drooped on her bosom. either with sleep, or weariness, or grief. But now and then she looked up and wailed, and called her mother ; yet she did not see Perseus, for the cap of darkness was on his head.

Full of pity and indignation Perseus drew near and looked upon the maid. Her cheeks were darker than his were, and her hair was blue-black like a hyacinth ; but Perseus thought—"I have never seen so beautiful a maiden ; no, not in all our Isles. Surely, she is a king's

daughter. Do barbarians treat their king's daughters thus? She is too fair, at least, to have done any wrong. I will speak to her."

And lifting the hat from his head, he flashed into her sight. She shrieked with terror, and tried to hide her face with her hair, for she could not with her hands; but Perseus cried,—

"Do not fear me, fair one; I am a Hellen, and no barbarian. What cruel men have bound you? But first I will set you free."

And he tore at the fetters; but they were too strong for him; while the maiden cried,—

"Touch me not; I am accursed, devoted as a victim to the sea-Gods. They will slay you if you dare to set me free."

"Let them try," said Perseus; and drawing Herpé from his thigh, he cut through the brass as if it had been flax.

"Now," he said, "you belong to me, and not to these sea-Gods, whosoever they may be!" But she only called the more on her mother.

"Why call on your mother? She can be no mother to have left you here. If a bird is dropped out of the nest, it belongs to the man who picks it up. If a jewel is cast by the wayside, it is his who dare win it and wear it, as I will win you and will wear you. I know now why Pallas Athené sent me hither. She sent me to gain a prize worth all my toil, and more."

And he clasped her in his arms, and cried,—"Where are these sea-Gods, cruel and unjust, who doom fair maids to death? I carry the weapons of Immortals. Let them measure their strength against mine! But tell me, maiden, who you are, and what dark fate brought you here."

And she answered, weeping—

"I am the daughter of Cepheus, King of Iopa, and my

mother is Cassiopœia of the beautiful tresses, and they called me Andromeda, as long as life was mine. And I stand bound here, hapless that I am, for the sea-monster's food, to atone for my mother's sin. For she boasted of me once that I was fairer than Atergatis, Queen of the Fishes ; so she in her wrath sent the sea-floods, and her brother the Fire King sent the earthquakes, and wasted all the land ; and after the floods a monster bred of the slime, who devours all living things. And now he must devour me, guiltless though I am—me who never harmed a living thing, nor saw a fish upon the shore but I gave it life, and threw it back into the sea ; for in our land we eat no fish, for fear of Atergatis their Queen. Yet the priests say that nothing but my blood can atone for a sin which I never committed."

But Perseus laughed, and said,—“A sea-monster ! I have fought with worse than him ; I would have faced Immortals for your sake ; how much more a beast of the sea ? ”

Then Andromeda looked up at him, and new hope was kindled in her breast, so proud and fair did he stand, with one hand round her, and in the other the glittering sword. But she only sighed, and wept the more, and cried,—

“Why will you die, young as you are ? Is there not death and sorrow enough in the world already ? It is noble for me to die, that I may save the lives of a whole people ; but you, better than them all, why should I slay you too ? Go you your way ; I must go mine.”

But Perseus cried—“Not so ; for the Lords of Olympus, whom I serve, are the friends of the heroes, and help them on to noble deeds. Led by them, I slew the Gorgon, the beautiful horror ; and not without them do I come hither, to slay this monster with that same Gorgon's head. Yet hide your eyes when I leave you, lest the sight of it freeze you too to stone.”

But the maiden answered nothing, for she could not believe his words. And then, suddenly looking up, she pointed to the sea, and shrieked,—

“ There he comes, with the sunrise, as they promised. I must die now. How shall I endure it? Oh, go! Is it not dreadful enough to be torn piecemeal without having you to look on? ” And she tried to thrust him away.

But he said—“ I go ; yet promise me one thing ere I go ; that if I slay this beast you will be my wife, and come back with me to my kingdom in fruitful Argos, for I am a king’s heir. Promise me, and seal it with a kiss.”

Then she lifted up her face, and kissed him ; and Perseus laughed for joy, and flew upward, while Andromeda crouched trembling on the rock, waiting for what might befall.

On came the great sea-monster, coasting along like a huge black galley, lazily breasting the ripple, and stopping at times by creek or headland, to watch for the laughter of girls at their bleaching, or cattle pawing on the sand-hills, or boys bathing on the beach. His great sides were fringed with clustering shells and sea-weeds, and the water gurgled in and out of his wide jaws, as he rolled along, dripping and glistening, in the beams of the morning sun.

At last he saw Andromeda, and shot forward to take his prey, while the waves foamed white behind him, and before him the fish fled leaping.

Then down from the height of the air fell Perseus, like a shooting star ; down to the crests of the waves, while Andromeda hid her face as he shouted ; and then there was silence for a while.

At last she looked up trembling, and saw Perseus springing toward her ; and instead of the monster a long black rock, with the sea rippling quietly round it.

Who then so proud as Perseus, as he leapt back to the rock, and lifted his fair Andromeda in his arms, and flew with her to the cliff-top, as a falcon carries a dove?

Who so proud as Perseus, and who so joyful as all the Æthiop people? For they had stood watching the monster from the cliffs, wailing for the maiden's fate. And already a messenger had gone to Cepheus and Cassiopœia, where they sat in sackcloth and ashes on the ground, in the innermost palace chambers, awaiting their daughter's end. And they came, and all the city with them, to see the wonder, with songs and with dances, with cymbals and harps, and received their daughter back again, as one alive from the dead.

Then Cepheus said—"Hero of the Hellens, stay here with me and be my son-in-law, and I will give you the half of my kingdom."

"I will be your son-in-law," said Perseus, "but of your kingdom I will have none; for I long after the pleasant land of Greece, and my mother who waits for me at home."

Then Cepheus said—"You must not take my daughter away at once, for she is to us like one alive from the dead. Stay with us here a year, and after that you shall return with honor." And Perseus consented; but before he went to the palace, he bade the people bring stones and wood, and built three altars, one to Athené, and one to Hermes, and one to Father Zeus, and offered bullocks and rams.

And some said—"This is a pious man:" yet the priests said—"The Sea Queen will be yet more fierce against us, because her monster is slain." But they were afraid to speak aloud, for they feared the Gorgon's head. So they went up to the palace: and when they came in, there stood in the hall Phineus, the brother of Cepheus, chafing like a bear robbed of her whelps, and with him

his sons, and his servants, and many an armed man ; and he cried to Cepheus,—

“ You shall not marry your daughter to this stranger, of whom no one knows even the name. Was not Andromeda betrothed to my son ? And now she is safe again, has he not a right to claim her ? ”

But Perseus laughed and answered—“ If your son is in want of a bride, let him save a maiden for himself. As yet he seems but a helpless bridegroom. He left this one to die, and dead she is to him. I saved her alive, and alive she is to me, but to no one else. Ungrateful man ! have I not saved your land, and the lives of your sons and daughters, and will you requite me thus ? Go, or it will be worse for you.” But all the men-at-arms drew their swords, and rushed on him like wild beasts.

Then he unveiled the Gorgon’s head, and said—“ This has delivered my bride from one wild beast ; it shall deliver her from many.” And as he spoke, Phineus and all his men-at-arms stopped short, and stiffened each man as he stood ; and before Perseus had drawn the goat-skin over the face again, they were all turned into stone.

Then Perseus bade the people bring levers and roll them out ; and what was done with them after that, I cannot tell.

So they made a great wedding-feast, which lasted seven whole days, and who so happy as Perseus and Andromeda ?

But on the eighth night, Perseus dreamed a dream ; and he saw standing beside him Pallas Athené, as he had seen her in Seriphos, seven long years before ; and she stood and called him by name, and said,—

“ Perseus, you have played the man, and see, you have your reward. Know now that the Gods are just, and help him who helps himself. Now give me here Herpé the sword, and the sandals, and the hat of darkness, that I

may give them back to their owners ; but the Gorgon's head you shall keep awhile, for you will need it in your land of Greece. Then you shall lay it up in my temple at Seriphos, that I may wear it on my shield forever, a terror to the Titans and the monsters, and the foes of Gods and men. And as for this land, I have appeased the sea and the fire, and there shall be no more floods nor earthquakes. But let the people build altars to Father Zeus and to me, and worship the Immortals, the Lords of heaven and earth."

And Perseus rose to give her the sword, and the cap, and the sandals ; but he woke, and his dream vanished away. And yet it was not altogether a dream ; for the goatskin with the head was in its place : but the sword, and the cap, and the sandals were gone, and Perseus never saw them more.

Then a great awe fell on Perseus ; and he went out in the morning to the people, and told his dream, and bade them build altars to Zeus the Father of Gods and men, and to Athené who gives wisdom to heroes ; and fear no more the earthquakes and the floods, but sow and build in peace. And they did so for a while, and prospered : but after Perseus was gone, they forgot Zeus and Athené, and worshipped again Atergatis the queen, and the undying fish of the sacred lake, where Deucalion's deluge was swallowed up, and they burnt their children before the Fire King, till Zeus was angry with that foolish people. and brought a strange nation against them out of Egypt. who fought against them and wasted them utterly, and dwelt in their cities for many a hundred years.

PART V.

HOW PERSEUS CAME HOME AGAIN.

AND when a year was ended, Perseus hired Phœnicians from Tyre, and cut down cedars, and built himself a noble galley ; and painted its cheeks with vermillion, and pitched its sides with pitch ; and in it he put Andromeda, and all her dowry of jewels, and rich shawls, and spices from the East ; and great was the weeping when they rowed away. But the remembrance of his brave deed was left behind ; and Andromeda's rock was shown at Joppa in Palestine, till more than a thousand years were past.

So Perseus and the Phœnicians rowed to the westward, across the sea of Crete, till they came to the blue Ægean and the pleasant Isles of Hellas, and Seriphos, his ancient home.

Then he left his galley on the beach, and went up as of old ; and he embraced his mother, and Dictys his good foster-father, and they wept over each other a long while, for it was seven years and more since they had met.

Then Perseus went out, and up to the hall of Polydectes ; and underneath the goat-skin he bore the Gorgon's head.

And when he came into the hall, Polydectes sat at the table-head, and all his nobles and landowners on either side, each according to his rank, feasting on the fish and the goat's flesh, and drinking the blood-red wine. The harpers harped, and the revellers shouted, and the wine-cups rang merrily as they passed from hand to hand, and great was the noise in the hall of Polydectes.

Then Perseus stood upon the threshold, and called to

the king by name. But none of the guests knew Perseus, for he was changed by his long journey. He had gone out a boy, and he was come home a hero ; his eye shone like an eagle's, and his beard was like a lion's beard, and he stood up like a wild bull in his pride.

But Polydectes the wicked knew him, and hardened his heart still more ; and scornfully he called,—

“Ah, foundling ! Have you found it more easy to promise than to fulfil?”

“Those whom the Gods help fulfil their promises ; and those who despise them, reap as they have sown. Behold the Gorgon's head !”

Then Perseus drew back the goat-skin, and held aloft the Gorgon's head.

Pale grew Polydectes and his guests, as they looked upon that dreadful face. They tried to rise up from their seats : but from their seats they never rose, but stiffened, each man where he sat, into a ring of cold gray stones.

Then Perseus turned and left them, and went down to his galley in the bay ; and he gave the kingdom to good Dictys, and sailed away with his mother and his bride.

And Polydectes and his guests sat still, with the wine-cups before them on the board ; till the rafters crumbled down above their heads, and the walls behind their backs, and the table crumbled down between them, and the grass sprung up about their feet : but Polydectes and his guests sit on the hill-side, a ring of gray stones until this day.

But Perseus rowed westward toward Argos, and landed, and went up to the town. And when he came, he found that Acrisius his grandfather had fled. For Proetus his wicked brother had made war against him afresh ; and had come across the river from Tiryns, and conquered Argos, and Acrisius had fled to Larissa, in the country of the wild Pelasgi.

Then Perseus called the Argives together, and told them

who he was, and all the noble deeds which he had done. And all the nobles and the yeomen made him king, for they saw that he had a royal heart; and they fought with him against Argos, and took it, and killed Proetus, and made the Cyclopes serve them, and build them walls round Argos, like the walls which they had built at Tiryns: and there were great rejoicings in the vale of Argos, because they had got a king from Father Zeus.

But Perseus's heart yearned after his grandfather, and he said, "Surely he is my flesh and blood; and he will love me now that I am come home with honor: I will go and find him, and bring him home, and we will reign together in peace."

So Perseus sailed away with his Phœnicians, round Hydrea and Sunium, past Marathon and the Attic shore, and through Euripus, and up the long Eubœan sea, till he came to the town of Larissa, where the wild Pelasgi dwelt.

And when he came there, all the people were in the fields, and there was feasting, and all kinds of games; for Teutamenes their king wished to honor Acrisius, because he was the king of a mighty land.

So Perseus did not tell his name, but went up the games unknown; for he said, "If I carry away the prize in the games, my grandfather's heart will be softened toward me."

So he threw off his helmet, and his cuirass, and all his clothes, and stood among the youths of Larissa, while all wondered at him, and said, "Who is this young stranger, who stands like a wild bull in his pride? Surely he is one of the heroes, the sons of the Immortals, from Olympus."

And when the games began, they wondered yet more; for Perseus was the best man of all, at running, and leaping, and wrestling, and throwing the javelin; and he won four crowns, and took them, and then he said to himself,

“There is a fifth crown yet to be won ; I will win that, and lay them all upon the knees of my grandfather.”

And as he spoke, he saw where Acrisius sat, by the side of Teutamenes the king, with his white beard flowing down upon his knees, and his royal staff in his hand ; and Perseus wept when he looked at him, for his heart yearned after his kin ; and he said, “Surely he is a kingly old man, yet he need not be ashamed of his grandson.”

Then he took the quoits, and hurled them, five fathoms beyond all the rest ; and the people shouted, “Further yet, brave stranger ! There has never been such a hurler in this land.”

Then Perseus put out all his strength, and hurled. But a gust of wind came from the sea, and carried the quoit aside, and far beyond all the rest ; and it fell on the foot of Acrisius, and he swooned away with the pain.

Perseus shrieked, and ran up to him ; but when they lifted the old man up, he was dead ; for his life was slow and feeble.

Then Perseus rent his clothes, and cast dust upon his head, and wept a long while for his grandfather. At last he rose, and called to all the people aloud, and said,—

“The Gods are true, and what they have ordained must be. I am Perseus, the grandson of this dead man, the far-famed slayer of the Gorgon.”

Then he told them how the prophecy had declared that he should kill his grandfather, and all the story of his life.

So they made a great mourning for Acrisius, and burnt him on a right rich pile ; and Perseus went to the temple, and was purified from the guilt of the death, because he had done it unknowingly.

Then he went home to Argos, and reigned there well with fair Andromeda ; and they had four sons and three daughters, and died in a good old age.

And when they died, the ancients say, Athené took them

up into the sky, with Cepheus and Cassiopœia. And there on starlight nights you may see them shining still; Cepheus with his kingly crown, and Cassiopœia in her ivory chair, plaiting her star-spangled tresses, and Perseus with the Gorgon's head, and fair Andromeda beside him, spreading her long white arms across the heaven, as she stood when chained to the stone for the monster. All night long they shine, for a beacon to wandering sailors: but all day they feast with the Gods, on the still blue peaks of Olympus.

STORY II. THE ARGONATUS.

STORY II.—THE ARGONAUTS.

PART I.

HOW THE CENTAUR TRAINED THE HEROES ON PELION.

I HAVE told you of a hero who fought with wild beasts and with wild men ; but now I have a tale of heroes who sailed away into distant land to win themselves renown forever, in the adventure of the Golden Fleece.

Whither they sailed, my children, I cannot clearly tell. It all happened long ago ; so long that it has all grown dim, like a dream which you dreamt last year. And why they went, I cannot tell ; some say that it was to win gold. It may be so ; but the noblest deeds which have been done on earth, have not been done for gold. It was not for the sake of gold that the Lord came down and died, and the Apostles went out to preach the good news in all lands. The Spartans looked for no reward in money when they fought and died at Thermopylæ ; and Socrates the wise asked no pay from his countrymen, but lived poor and barefoot all his days, only caring to make men good. And there are heroes in our days also, who do noble deeds, but not for gold. Our discoverers did not go to make themselves rich, when they sailed out one after another into the dreary frozen seas ; nor did the ladies, who went out last year, to drudge in the hospitals of the East, making themselves poor, that

they might be rich in noble works. And young men, too, whom you know, children, and some of them of your own kin, did they say to themselves, "How much money shall I earn?" when they went out to the war, leaving wealth, and comfort, and a pleasant home, and all that money can give, to face hunger and thirst, and wounds and death, that they might fight for their country and their Queen? No, children, there is a better thing on earth than wealth, a better thing than life itself; and that is, to have done something before you die, for which good men may honor you, and God your Father smile upon your work.

Therefore we will believe—why should we not?—of these same Argonauts of old, that they too were noble men, who planned and did a noble deed; and that therefore their fame has lived, and been told in story and in song, mixed up, no doubt, with dreams and fables, and yet true and right at heart. So we will honor these old Argonauts, and listen to their story as it stands; and we will try to be like them, each of us in our place; for each of us has a Golden Fleece to seek, and a wild sea to sail over, ere we reach it, and dragons to fight ere it be ours.

And what was that first Golden Fleece? I do not know, nor care. The old Hellens said that it hung in Colchis, which we call the Circassian coast, nailed to a beech-tree in the war-God's wood; and that it was the fleece of the wondrous ram, who bore Phrixus and Helle across the Euxine sea. For Phrixus and Helle were the children of the cloud-nymph, and of Athamas the Minuan king. And when a famine came upon the land, their cruel step-mother, Ino, wished to kill them, that her own children might reign, and said that they must be sacrificed on an altar, to turn away the anger of the gods. So the poor children were brought to the altar, and the priest stood

ready with his knife, when out of the clouds came the Golden Ram, and took them on his back, and vanished. Then madness came upon that foolish king Athamas, and ruin upon Ino and her children. For Athamas killed one of them in his fury, and Ino fled from him with the other in her arms, and leaped from a cliff into the sea, and was changed into a dolphin, such as you have seen, which wanders over the waves forever sighing, with its little one clasped to its breast.

But the people drove out King Athamas, because he had killed his child; and he roamed about in his misery till he came to the Oracle in Delphi. And the Oracle told him that he must wander for his sin, till the wild beasts should feast him as their guest. So he went on in hunger and in sorrow for many a weary day, till he saw a pack of wolves. The wolves were tearing a sheep; but when they saw Athamas they fled, and left the sheep for him, and he ate of it; and then he knew that the oracle was fulfilled at last. So he wandered no more; but settled, and built a town, and became a king again.

But the ram carried the two children far away over land and sea, till he came to the Thracian Chersonese, and there Helle fell into the sea. So those narrow straits are called "Hellespont," after her; and they bear that name until this day.

Then the ram flew on with Phrixus to the northeast across the sea which we call the Black Sea now; but the Hellens called it Euxine. And at last, they say, he stopped at Colchis, on the steep Circassian coast; and there Phrixus married Chalchiope, the daughter of Aietes the king; and offered the ram in sacrifice; and Aietes nailed the ram's fleece to a beech, in the grove of Ares the war-God.

And after awhile Phrixus died, and was buried, but his spirit had no rest; for he was buried far from his native

land, and the pleasant hills of Hellas. So he came in dreams to the heroes of the Minuai, and called sadly by their beds,—“Come and set my spirit free, that I may go home to my fathers and to my kinsfolk, and the pleasant Minuan land.”

And they asked—“How shall we set your spirit free?”

“You must sail over the sea to Colchis, and bring home the golden fleece; and then my spirit will come back with it, and I shall sleep with my fathers and have rest.”

He came thus, and called to them often; but when they woke they looked at each other, and said—“Who dare sail to Colchis, or bring home the golden fleece?” And in all the country none was brave enough to try it; for the man and the time were not come.

Phrixus had a cousin called Æson, who was king in Iolcos by the sea. There he ruled over the rich Minuan heroes, as Athamas his uncle ruled in Bœotia; and like Athamas he was an unhappy man. For he had a step-brother named Pelias, of whom some said that he was a nymph’s son, and there were dark and sad tales about his birth. When he was a babe he was cast out on the mountains, and a wild mare came by and kicked him. But a shepherd passing found the baby, with its face all blackened by the blow; and took him home, and called him Pelias, because his face was bruised and black. And he grew up fierce and lawless, and did many a fearful deed; and at last he drove out Æson his step-brother, and then his own brother Neleus, and took the kingdom to himself, and ruled over the rich Minuan heroes, in Iolcos by the sea.

And Æson, when he was driven out, went sadly away out of the town, leading his little son by the hand; and he said to himself, “I must hide the child in the moun-

tains ; or Pelias will surely kill him, because he is the heir."

So he went up from the sea across the valley, through the vineyards and the olive groves, and across the torrent of Anauros toward Pelion the ancient mountain, whose brows are white with snow.

He went up and up into the mountain over marsh, and crag, and down, till the boy was tired and foot-sore, and Æson had to bear him in his arms, till he came to the mouth of a lonely cave, at the foot of a mighty cliff.

Above the cliff the snow wreaths hung, dripping and cracking in the sun : but at its foot around the cave's mouth grew all fair flowers and herbs, as if in a garden, ranged in order, each sort by itself. There they grew gayly in the sunshine, and the spray of the torrent from above ; while from the cave came the sound of music, and a man's voice singing to the harp.

Then Æson put down the lad and whispered,—

"Fear not, but go in, and whomsoever you shall find, lay your hands upon his knees, and say, 'In the name of Zeus the father of Gods and men, I am your guest from this day forth.'"

Then the lad went in without trembling, for he too was a hero's son : but when he was within he stopped in wonder, to listen to that magic song.

And there he saw the singer lying, upon bear-skins and fragrant boughs ; Cheiron, the ancient centaur, the wisest of all things beneath the sky. Down to the waist he was a man ; but below he was a noble horse ; his white hair rolled down over his broad shoulders, and his white beard over his broad brown chest ; and his eyes were wise and mild, and his forehead like a mountain-wall.

And in his hands he held a harp of gold, and struck it with a golden key ; and as he struck, he sang till his eyes glittered, and filled all the cave with light.

And he sang of the birth of Time, and of the heavens and the dancing stars ; and of the ocean, and the ether, and the fire, and the shaping of the wondrous earth. And he sang of the treasures of the hills, and the hidden jewels of the mine, and the veins of fire and metal, and the virtues of all healing herbs, and of the speech of birds, and of prophecy, and of hidden things to come.

Then he sang of health, and strength, and manhood, and a valiant heart ; and of music, and hunting, and wrestling, and all the games which heroes love ; and of travel, and wars, and sieges, and a noble death in fight ; and then he sang of peace and plenty, and of equal justice in the land : and as he sang, the boy listened wide-eyed, and forgot his errand in the song.

And at the last old Cheiron was silent, and called the lad with a soft voice.

And the lad ran trembling to him, and would have laid his hands upon his knees : but Cheiron smiled, and said, "Call hither your father Æson, for I know you, and all that has befallen, and saw you both afar in the valley, even before you left the town."

Then Æson came in sadly, and Cheiron asked him, "Why camest you not yourself to me, Æson the Æolid?"

And Æson said,—

"I thought, Cheiron will pity the lad if he sees him come alone ; and I wished to try whether he was fearless, and dare venture like a hero's son. But now I entreat you by Father Zeus, let the boy be your guest till better times, and train him among the sons of the heroes, that he may avenge his father's house."

Then Cheiron smiled, and drew the lad to him, and laid his hand upon his golden locks, and said, "Are you afraid of my horse's hoofs, fair boy, or will you be my pupil from this day?"

"I would gladly have horse's hoofs like you, if I could sing such songs as yours."

And Cheiron laughed, and said, "Sit here by me till sundown, when your playfellows will come home, and you shall learn like them to be a king, worthy to rule over gallant men."

Then he turned to Æson, and said, "Go back in peace, and bend before the storm like a prudent man. This boy shall not cross the Anauros again, till he has become a glory to you and to the house of Æolus."

And Æson wept over his son and went away ; but the boy did not weep, so full was his fancy of that strange cave, and the Centaur, and his song, and the playfellows whom he was to see.

Then Cheiron put the lyre into his hands, and taught him how to play it, till the sun sank low behind the cliff, and a shout was heard outside.

And then in came the sons of the heroes, Æneas, and Heracles, and Peleus, and many another mighty name.

And great Cheiron leapt up joyfully, and his hoofs made the cave resound, as they shouted, "Come out, Father Cheiron ; come out and see our game." And one cried, "I have killed two deer," and another, "I took a wild cat among the crags ;" and Heracles dragged a wild goat after him by its horns, for he was as huge as a mountain crag ; and Cæneus carried a bear-cub under each arm, and laughed when they scratched and bit ; for neither tooth nor steel could wound him.

And Cheiron praised them all, each according to his deserts.

Only one walked apart and silent, Asclepius, the too-wise child, with his bosom full of herbs and flowers, and round his wrist a spotted snake ; he came with downcast eyes to Cheiron, and whispered how he had watched the snake cast his old skin, and grow young again before his

eyes, and how he had gone down into a village in the vale, and cured a dying man with a herb which he had seen a sick goat eat.

And Cheiron smiled, and said, "To each Athené and Apollo give some gift, and each is worthy in his place ; but to this child they have given an honor beyond all honors, to cure while others kill."

Then the lads brought in wood, and split it, and lighted a blazing fire ; and others skinned the deer and quartered them, and set them to roast before the fire ; and while the venison was cooking they bathed in the snow torrent, and washed away the dust and sweat.

And then all ate till they could eat no more, (for they had tasted nothing since the dawn,) and drank of the clear spring water, for wine is not fit for growing lads. And when the remnants were put away, they all lay down upon the skins and leaves about the fire, and each took the lyre in turn, and sang and played with all his heart.

And after a while they all went out to a plot of grass at the cave's mouth, and there they boxed, and ran, and wrestled, and laughed till the stones fell from the cliffs.

Then Cheiron took his lyre, and all the lads joined hands ; and as he played, they danced to his measure, in and out, and round and round. There they danced hand in hand, till the night fell over land and sea, while the black glen shone with their broad white limbs, and the gleam of their golden hair.

And the lad danced with them, delighted, and then slept a wholesome sleep, upon fragrant leaves of bay, and myrtle, and marjoram, and flowers of thyme ; and rose at the dawn, and bathed in the torrent, and became a schoolfellow to the heroes' sons, and forgot Iolcos, and his father, and all his former life. But he grew strong, and brave and cunning, upon the pleasant downs of Pelion, in the keen hungry mountain air. And he learnt

to wrestle, and to box, and to hunt, and to play upon the harp ; and next he learnt to ride, for old Cheiron used to mount him on his back ; and he learnt the virtues of all herbs, and how to cure all wounds ; and Cheiron called him Jason the healer, and that is his name until this day.

PART II.

HOW JASON LOST HIS SANDAL IN ANAUROS.

AND ten years came and went, and Jason was grown to be a mighty man. Some of his fellows were gone, and some were grown up by his side. Asclepius was gone into Peloponnese, to work his wondrous cures on men ; and some say he used to raise the dead to life. And Heracles was gone to Thebes, to fulfil those famous labors which have become a proverb among men. And Peleus had married a sea-nymph, and his wedding is famous to this day. And Æneas was gone home to Troy, and many a noble tale you will read of him and of all the other gallant heroes, the scholars of Cheiron the just. And it happened on a day that Jason stood on the mountain, and looked north and south and east and west ; and Cherion stood by him and watched him, for he knew that the time was come.

And Jason looked and saw the plains of Thessaly, where the Lapithai breed their horses ; and the lake of Boibé, and the stream which runs northward to Peneus and Tempe ; and he looked north, and saw the mountain wall which guards the Magnesian shore ; Olympus, the seat of the Immortals, and Ossa, and Pelion, where he stood. Then he looked east and saw the bright blue sea, which stretched away forever toward the dawn. Then he looked south, and saw a pleasant land, with white-walled towns and farms, nestling along the shore of a land-locked bay, while the smoke rose blue among the trees ; and he

knew it for the bay of Pagasai, and the rich low lands of Hæmonia, and Iolcos by the sea.

Then he sighed, and asked : "Is it true what the heroes tell me, that I am heir of that fair land ?"

"And what good would it be to you, Jason, if you were heir of that fair land ?"

"I would take it and keep it."

"A strong man has taken it and kept it long. Are you stronger than Pelias the terrible ?"

"I can try my strength with his," said Jason. But Cheiron sighed, and said : —

"You have many a danger to go through before you rule in Iolcos by the sea ; many a danger and many a woe ; and strange troubles in strange lands, such as man never saw before."

"The happier I," said Jason, "to see what man never saw before."

And Cheiron sighed again, and said : "The eaglet must leave the nest when it is fledged. Will you go to Iolcos by the sea ? Then promise me two things before you go."

Jason promised, and Cheiron answered : "Speak harshly to no soul whom you may meet, and stand by the word which you shall speak."

Jason wondered why Cheiron asked this of him ; but he knew that the Centaur was a prophet, and saw things long before they came. So he promised, and leaped down the mountain, to take his fortune like a man.

He went down through the arbutus thickets, and across the downs of thyme, till he came to the vineyard walls, and the pomegranates and the olives in the glen ; and among the olives roared Anauros, all foaming with a summer flood.

And on the bank of Anauros sat a woman all wrinkled, gray, and old ; her head shook palsied on her breast, and

her hands shook palsied on her knees ; and when she saw Jason, she spoke whining : “ Who will carry me across the flood ? ”

Jason was bold and hasty, and was just going to leap into the flood ; and yet he thought twice before he leapt, so loud roared the torrent down, all brown from the mountain rains, and silver-veined with melting snow ; while underneath he could hear the boulders rumbling like the tramp of horsemen or the roll of wheels, as they ground along the narrow channel, and shook the rocks on which he stood.

But the old woman whined all the more : “ I am weak and old, fair youth. For Hera’s sake, carry me over the torrent.”

And Jason was going to answer her scornfully, when Cheiron’s words came to his mind.

So he said : “ For Hera’s sake, the Queen of the Immortals on Olympus, I will carry you over the torrent, unless we both are drowned midway.”

Then the old dame leapt upon his back, as nimbly as a goat ; and Jason staggered in, wondering ; and the first step was up to his knees.

The first step was up to his knees, and the second step was up to his waist ; and the stones rolled about his feet, and his feet slipped about the stones ; so he went on staggering and panting, while the old woman cried from off his back :—

“ Fool, you have wet my mantle ! Do you make game of poor old souls like me ? ”

Jason had half a mind to drop her, and let her get through the torrent by herself ; but Cheiron’s words were in his mind, and he said only : “ Patience, mother ; the best horse may stumble some day.”

At last he staggered to the shore, and set her down upon the bank ; and a strong man he needed to have

been, or that wild water he never would have crossed.

He lay panting awhile upon the bank, and then leapt up to go upon his journey ; but he cast one look at the old woman, for he thought, "She should thank me once at least."

And as he looked, she grew fairer than all women, and taller than all men on earth ; and her garments shone like the summer sea, and her jewels like the stars of heaven ; and over her forehead was a veil, woven of the golden clouds of sunset ; and through the veil she looked down on him, with great soft heifer's eyes ; with great eyes, mild and awful, which filled all the glen with light.

And Jason fell upon his knees, and hid his face between his hands.

And she spoke — "I am the Queen of Olympus, Hera the wife of Zeus. As thou hast done to me, so will I do to thee. Call on me in the hour of need, and try if the Immortals can forget."

And when Jason looked up, she rose from off the earth, like a pillar of tall white cloud, and floated away across the mountain peaks, toward Olympus the holy hill.

Then a great fear fell on Jason ; but after a while he grew light of heart ; and he bles ed old Cheilon, and said—"Surely the Centaur is a prophet, and guesse what would come to pass, when he bade me speak har hly to no soul whom I might m et."

Then he went down toward Iolcos, and as he walked, he found that he had lost one of his sandals in the flood.

And as he went through the streets, the pe ple came out to look at him, so tall and fair was he ; but some of the elders whispered together ; and at last one of them stopped Jason, and called to him—"Fair lad, who are you, and whence come you ; and what is your erran l in the town?"

"My name, good father, is Jason, and I come fr m

Pelion up above ; and my errand is to Pelias your king ; tell me then where his palace is."

But the old man started, and grew pale, and said, "Do you not know the oracle, my son, that you go so boldly through the town, with but one sandal on?"

"I am a stranger here, and know of no oracle ; but what of my one sandal? I lost the other in Anauros, while I was struggling with the flood."

Then the old man looked back to his companions ; and one sighed and another smiled ; at last he said—"I will tell you, lest you rush upon your ruin unawares. The oracle in Delphi has said, that a man wearing one sandal should take the kingdom from Pelias, and keep it for himself. Therefore beware how you go up to his palace, for he is the fiercest and most cunning of all kings."

Then Jason laughed a great laugh, like a war-horse in his pride—"Good news, good father, both for you and me. For that very end I came into the town."

Then he strode on toward the palace of Pelias, while all the people wondered at his bearing.

And he stood in the doorway and cried, "Come out, come out, Pelias the valiant, and fight for your kingdom like a man."

Pelias came out wondering, and "Who are you, bold youth?" he cried.

"I am Jason, the son of Æson, the heir of all this land."

Then Pelias lifted up his hands and eyes, and wept, or seemed to weep ; and blessed the heavens which had brought his nephew to him, never to leave him more. "For," said he, "I have but three daughters, and no son to be my heir. You shall be my heir then, and rule the kingdom after me, and marry whichever of my daughters you shall choose ; though a sad kingdom you will

find it, and whosoever rules it a miserable man. But come in, come in, and feast."

So he drew Jason in, whether he would or not, and spoke to him so lovingly and feasted him so well, that Jason's anger passed; and after supper his three cousins came into the hall, and Jason thought that he should like well enough to have one of them for his wife.

But at last he said to Pelias, "Why do you look so sad, my uncle? And what did you mean just now, when you said that this was a doleful kingdom, and its ruler a miserable man?"

Then Pelias sighed heavily again and again and again, like a man who had to tell some dreadful story and was afraid to begin; but at last—

"For seven long years and more have I never known a quiet night; and no more will he who comes after me, till the golden fleece be brought home."

Then he told Jason the story of Phrixus, and of the golden fleece; and told him, too, which was a lie, that Phrixus's spirit tormented him, calling to him day and night. And his daughters came, and told the same tale, (for their father had taught them their parts,) and wept and said, "Oh, who will bring home the golden fleece, that our uncle's spirit may have rest; and that we may have rest also, whom he never lets sleep in peace?"

Jason sat awhile, sad and silent; for he had often heard of that golden fleece; but he looked on it as a thing hopeless and impossible for any mortal man to win it.

But when Pelias saw him silent, he began to talk of other things, and courted Jason more and more, speaking to him as if he was certain to be his heir, and asking his advice about the kingdom; till Jason, who was young and simple, could not help saying to himself, "Surely he is not the dark man whom people call him. Yet why did he drive my father out?" And he asked Pelias bold-

ly, "Men say that you are terrible, and a man of blood ; but I find you a kind and hospitable man ; and as you are to me, so will I be to you. Yet why did you drive my father out?"

Pelias smiled and sighed ; "Men have slandered me in that, as in all things. Your father was growing old and weary, and he gave the kingdom up to me of his own will. You shall see him to-morrow, and ask him ; and he will tell you the same."

Jason's heart leaped in him, when he heard that he was to see his father ; and he believed all that Pelias said, forgetting that his father might not dare to tell the truth.

"One thing more there is," said Pelias, "on which I need your advice ; for though you are young, I see in you a wisdom beyond your years. There is one neighbor of mine, whom I dread more than all men on earth. I am stronger than he now, and can command him : but I know that if he stay among us, he will work my ruin in the end. Can you give me a plan, Jason, by which I can rid myself of that man?"

After awhile, Jason answered, half laughing, "Were I you, I would send him to fetch that same golden fleece ; for if he once set forth after it you would never be troubled with him more."

And at that a bitter smile came across Pelias's lips, and a flash of wicked joy into his eyes ; and Jason saw it, and started ; and over his mind came the warning of the old man, and his own one sandal, and the oracle, and he saw that he was taken in a trap.

But Pelias only answered gently, "My son, he shall be sent forthwith."

"You mean me?" cried Jason, starting up, "because I came here with one sandal?" And he lifted his fist angrily, while Pelias stood up to him like a wolf at bay ;

and whether of the two was the stronger and the fiercer, it would be hard to tell.

But after a moment Pelias spoke gently—"Why then so rash, my son? You, and not I, have said what is said; why blame me for what I have not done? Had you bid me love the man of whom I spoke, and make him my son-in-law and heir, I would have obeyed you; and what if I obey you now, and send the man to win himself immortal fame? I have not harmed you, or him. One thing at least I know, that he will go, and that gladly; for he has a hero's heart within him; loving glory, and scorning to break the word which he has given."

Jason saw that he was entrapped: but his second promise to Cheiron came into his mind, and he thought, "What if the Centaur were a prophet in that also, and meant that I should win the fleece!" Then he cried aloud,—

"You have well spoken, cunning uncle of mine! I love glory, and I dare keep to my word. I will go and fetch this golden fleece. Promise me but this in return, and keep your word as I keep mine. Treat my father lovingly while I am gone, for the sake of the all-seeing Zeus; and give me up the kingdom for my own, on the day that I bring back the golden fleece."

Then Pelias looked at him and almost loved him, in the midst of all his hate; and said, "I promise, and I will perform. It will be no shame to give up my kingdom to the man who wins that fleece."

Then they swore a great oath between them; and afterwards both went in, and lay down to sleep.

But Jason could not sleep, for thinking of his mighty oath, and how he was to fulfil it, all alone, and without wealth or friends. So he tossed a long time upon his bed, and thought of this plan and of that; and sometimes Phrixus seemed to call him, in a thin voice, faint and low, as if it came from far across the sea—"Let me come

home to my fathers and have rest." And sometimes he seemed to see the eyes of Hera, and to hear her words again,—“Call on me in the hour of need, and see if the Immortals can forget.”

And on the morrow he went to Pelias, and said, “Give me a victim, that I may sacrifice to Hera.” So he went up, and offered his sacrifice ; and as he stood by the altar, Hera sent a thought into his mind ; and he went back to Pelias, and said :—

“If you are indeed in earnest, give me two heralds, that they may go round to all the princes of the Minuiai, who were pupils of the Centaur with me, that we may fit out a ship together, and take what shall befall.”

At that Pelias praised his wisdom, and hastened to send the heralds out ; for he said in his heart, “Let all the princes go with him, and like him, never return ; for so I shall be lord of all the Minuiai, and the greatest king in Hellas.”

PART III.

HOW THEY BUILT THE SHIP ARGO IN IOLCOS.

So the heralds went out, and cried to all the heroes of the Minuai, "Who dare come to the adventure of the golden fleece?"

And Hera stirred the hearts of all the princes, and they came from all their valleys to the yellow sands of Pagasai. And first came Heracles the mighty, with his lion's skin and club, and behind him Hylas his young squire, who bore his arrows and his bow; and Tiphys, the skilful steersman; and Butes, the fairest of all men; and Castor and Polydeuces the twins, the sons of the magic swan; and Caineus, the strongest of all mortals, whom the Centaurs tried in vain to kill, and overwhelmed him with trunks of pine-trees, but even so he would not die; and thither came Zetes and Calais, the winged sons of the north wind; and Peleus, the father of Achilles, whose bride was silver-footed Thetis the goddess of the sea. And thither came Telamon and Oileus, the fathers of the two Aianntes, who fought upon the plains of Troy; and Mopsus, the wise soothsayer, who knew the speech of birds; and Idmon, to whom Phœbus gave a tongue to prophesy of things to come; and Ancaios, who could read the stars, and knew all the circles of the heavens; and Argus, the famed shipbuilder, and many a hero more, in helmets of brass and gold with tall dyed horse-hair crests, and embroidered shirts of linen beneath their coats of mail, and greaves of polished tin to guard their knees in fight; with each man his shield upon his shoulder, of

many a fold of tough bull's hide, and his sword of tempered bronze in his silver-studded belt, and in his right hand a pair of lances, of the heavy white ash-staves.

So they came down to Iolcos, and all the city came out to meet them, and were never tired with looking at their height, and their beauty, and their gallant bearing, and the glitter of their inlaid arms. And some said, "Never was such a gathering of the heroes since the Hellens conquered the land." But the women sighed over them, and whispered, "Alas! they are all going to their death."

Then they felled the pines on Pelion, and shaped them with the axe, and Argus taught them to build a galley, the first long ship which ever sailed the seas. They pierced her for fifty oars, an oar for each hero of the crew, and pitched her with coal-black pitch, and painted her bows with vermilion; and they named her *Argo* after Argus, and worked at her all day long. And at night Pelias feasted them like a king, and they slept in his palace-porch.

But Jason went away to the northward, and into the land of Thrace, till he found Orpheus, the prince of minstrels, where he dwelt in his cave under Rhodope, among the savage Cicon tribes. And he asked him—"Will you leave your mountains, Orpheus, my fellow-scholar in old times, and cross Strymon once more with me, to sail with the heroes of the Minuæ, and bring home the golden fleece, and charm for us all men and all monsters with your magic harp and song?"

Then Orpheus sighed—"Have I not had enough of toil and of weary wandering far and wide, since I lived in Cheiron's cave, above Iolcos by the sea? In vain is the skill and the voice which my goddess mother gave me; in vain have I sung and labored; in vain I went down to the dead, and charmed all the kings of Hades, to win back Eurydice my bride. For I won her, my beloved, and lost

her again the same day, and wandered away in my madness, even to Egypt and the Libyan sands, and the isles of all the seas, driven on by the terrible gadfly, while I charmed in vain the hearts of men, and the savage forest beasts, and the trees, and the lifeless stones, with my magic harp and song, giving rest, but finding none. But at last Calliope, my mother, delivered me, and brought me home in peace ; and I dwell here in the cave alone, among the savage Cicon tribes softening their wild hearts with music and the gentle laws of Zeus. And now I must go out again, to the ends of all the earth, far away into the misty darkness, to the last wave of the Eastern Sea. But what is doomed must be, and a friend's demand obeyed ; for prayers are the daughters of Zeus, and who honors them honors him."

Then Orpheus rose up sighing, and took his harp, and went over Strymon. And he led Jason to the southwest, up the banks of Haliacmon and over the spurs of Pindus, to Dodona the town of Zeus, where it stood by the side of the sacred lake, and the fountain which breathed out fire, in the darkness of the ancient oak wood, beneath the mountain of the hundred springs. And he led him to the holy oak, where the black dove settled in old times, and was changed into the priestess of Zeus, and gave oracles to all nations round. And he bade him cut down a bough, and sacrifice to Hera and to Zeus ; and they took the bough and came to Iolcos, and nailed it to the beak-head of the ship.

And at last the ship was finished, and they tried to launch her down the beach ; but she was too heavy for them to move her, and her keel sank deep in the sand. Then all the heroes looked at each other blushing ; but Jason spoke, and said, " Let us ask the magic bough ; perhaps it can help us in our need."

Then a voice came from the bough, and Jason heard

the words it said, and bade Orpheus play upon the harp, while the heroes waited round, holding the pine-trunk rollers, to help her toward the sea.

Then Orpheus took his harp, and began his magic song : " How sweet it is to ride upon the surges, and to leap from wave to wave, while the wind sings cheerful in the cordage, and the oars flash fast among the foam ! How sweet it is to roam across the ocean, and see new towns and wondrous lands, and to come home laden with treasure, and to win undying fame ! "

And the good ship *Argo* heard him, and longed to be away and out at sea ; till she stirred in every timber, and heaved from stem to stern, and leapt up from the sand upon the rollers, and plunged onward like a gallant horse ; and the heroes fed her path with pine-trunks, till she rushed into the whispering sea.

Then they stored her well with food and water, and pulled the ladder up on board, and settled themselves each man to his oar, and kept time to Orpheus's harp ; and away across the bay they rowed southward, while the people lined the cliffs ; and the women wept while the men shouted, at the starting of that gallant crew.

PART IV.

HOW THE ARGONAUTS SAILED TO COLCHIS.

AND what happened next, my children, whether it be true or not, stands written in ancient songs, which you shall read for yourselves some day. And grand old songs they are, written in grand old rolling verse ; and they call them the Songs of Orpheus, or the Orphics, to this day. And they tell how the heroes came to Aphetai, across the bay, and waited for the southwest wind, and chose themselves a captain from their crew : and how all called for Heracles, because he was the strongest and most huge ; but Heracles refused, and called for Jason, because he was the wisest of them all. So Jason was chosen captain : and Orpheus heaped a pile of wood, and slew a bull, and offered it to Hera, and called all the heroes to stand round, each man's head crowned with olive, and to strike their swords into the bull. Then he filled a golden goblet with the bull's blood, and with wheaten flour, and honey, and wine, and the bitter salt sea-water, and bade the heroes taste. So each tasted the goblet, and passed it round, and vowed an awful vow : and they vowed before the sun, and the night, and the blue-haired sea who shakes the land, to stand by Jason faithfully, in the adventure of the golden fleece ; and whosoever shrank back, or disobeyed, or turned traitor to his vow, then justice should witness against him, and the Erinnues who track guilty men.

Then Jason lighted the pile, and burnt the carcase of the bull ; and they went to their ship and sailed eastward,

like men who have a work to do ; and the place from which they went was called Aphetai, the sailing-place, from that day forth. Three thousand years and more they sailed away, into the unknown Eastern seas ; and great nations have come and gone since then, and many a storm has swept the earth ; and many a mighty armament, to which Argo would be but one small boat, English and French, Turkish and Russian, have sailed those waters since ; yet the fame of that small Argo lives forever, and her name is become a proverb among men.

So they sailed past the Isle of Sciathos, with the Cape of Sepius on their left, and turned to the northward toward Pelion, up the long Magnesian shore. On their right hand was the open sea, and on their left old Pelion rose, while the clouds crawled round his dark pine-forests, and his caps of summer snow. And their hearts yearned for the dear old mountain, as they thought of pleasant days gone by ; and of the sports of their boyhood, and their hunting, and their schooling in the cave beneath the cliff. And at last Peleus spoke—" Let us land here, friends, and climb the dear old hill once more. We are going on a fearful journey : who knows if we shall see Pelion again ? Let us go up to Cheiron our master, and ask his blessing ere we start. And I have a boy, too, with him, whom he trains as he trained me once, the son whom Thetis brought me, the silver-footed lady of the sea, whom I caught in the cave, and tamed her, though she changed her shape seven times. For she changed, as I held her, into water, and to vapor, and to burning flame, and to a rock, and to a black-maned lion, and to a tall and stately tree. But I held her and held her ever, till she took her own shape again, and led her to my father's house, and won her for my bride. And all the rulers of Olympus came to our wedding, and the heavens and the earth rejoiced together, when an immortal wedded mortal

man. And now let me see my son ; for it is not often I shall see him upon earth : famous he will be, but short-lived, and die in the flower of youth."

So Tiphys, the helmsman, steered them to the shore under the crags of Pelion ; and they went up through the dark pine-forests toward the Centaur's cave.

And they came into the misty hall, beneath the snow-crowned crag ; and saw the great Centaur lying with his huge limbs spread upon the rock ; and beside him stood Achilles, the child whom no steel could wound, and played upon his harp right sweetly, while Cheiron watched and smiled.

Then Cheiron leapt up and welcomed them, and kissed them every one, and set a feast before them, of swine's flesh, and venison, and good wine ; and young Achilles served them, and carried the golden goblet round. And after supper all the heroes clapped their hands, and called on Orpheus to sing ; but he refused, and said, "How can I, who am the younger, sing before our ancient host ?" So they called on Cheiron to sing, and Achilles brought him his harp ; and he began a wondrous song ; a famous story of old time, of the fight between Centaurs and the Lapithai, which you may still see carved in stone.* He sang how his brothers came to ruin by their folly, when they were mad with wine ; and how they and the heroes fought, with fists, and teeth, and the goblets from which they drank ; and how they tore up the pine trees in their fury, and hurled great crags of stone, while the mountains thundered with the battle, and the land was wasted far and wide ; till the Lapithai drove them from their home in the rich Thessalian plains to the lonely glens of Pindus, leaving Cheiron all alone.

* In the Elgin Marbles.

And the heroes praised his song right heartily ; for some of them had helped in that great fight.

Then Orpheus took the lyre, and sang of Chaos, and the making of the wondrous World, and how all things sprang from Love, who could not live alone in the Abyss. And as he sang, his voice rose from the cave, above the crags, and through the tree-tops, and the glens of oak and pine. And the trees bowed their heads when they heard it, and the gray rocks cracked and rang, and the forest beasts crept near to listen, and the birds forsook their nests and hovered round. And old Cheiron clapt his hands together, and beat his hoofs upon the ground, for wonder at that magic song.

Then Peleus kissed his boy, and wept over him, and they went down to the ship ; and Cheiron came down with them, weeping, and kissed them one by one, and blest them, and promised to them great renown. And the heroes wept when they left him, till their great hearts could weep no more ; for he was kind and just and pious, and wiser than all beasts and men. Then he went up to a cliff, and prayed for them, that they might come home safe and well ; while the heroes rowed away, and watched him standing on his cliff above the sea, with his great hands raised toward heaven, and his white locks waving in the wind ; and they strained their eyes to watch him to the last, for they felt that they should look on him no more.

So they rowed on over the long swell of the sea, past Olympus, the seat of the Immortals, and past the wooded bays of Athos, and Samothrace, the sacred isle ; and they came past Lemnos to the Hellespont, and through the narrow strait of Abydos, and so on into the Propontis, which we call Marmora now. And there they met with Cyzicus, ruling in Asia over the Dolions, who, the songs say, was the son of Æneas, of whom you will hear many

a tale some day. For Homer tells us how he fought at Troy ; and Virgil how he sailed away and founded Rome ; and men believed until late years that from him sprang our old British kings. Now Cyzicus, the songs say, welcomed the heroes ; for his father had been one of Cheiron's scholars ; so he welcomed them, and feasted them, and stored their ship with corn and wine, and cloaks and rugs, the songs say, and shirts, of which no doubt they stood in need.

But at night, while they lay sleeping, came down on them terrible men, who lived with the bears in the mountains, like Titans or giants in shape ; for each of them had six arms, and they fought with young firs and pines. But Heracles killed them all before morn with his deadly poisoned arrows ; but among them, in the darkness he slew Cyzicus the kindly prince.

Then they got to their ship and to their oars, and Tiphys bade them cast off the hawsers, and go to sea. But as he spoke a whirlwind came, and spun the Argo round, and twisted the hawsers together, so that no man could loose them. Then Tiphys dropped the rudder from his hand, and cried, "This comes from the Gods above." But Jason went forward, and asked counsel of the magic bough.

Then the magic bough spoke and answered,—“This is because you have slain Cyzicus your friend. You must appease his soul, or you will never leave this shore.”

Jason went back sadly, and told the heroes what he had heard. And they leapt on shore, and searched till dawn ; and at dawn they found the body, all rolled in dust and blood, among the corpses of those monstrous beasts. And they wept over their kind host, and laid him on a fair bed, and heaped a huge mound over him, and offered black sheep at his tomb, and Orpheus sang a

magic song to him, that his spirit might have rest. And then they held games at the tomb, after the custom of those times, and Jason gave prizes to each winner. To Ancæus he gave a golden cup, for he wrestled best of all; and to Heracles a silver one, for he was the strongest of all; and to Castor, who rode best, a golden crest; and Polydeuces the boxer had a rich carpet, and to Orpheus for his song, a sandal with golden wings. But Jason himself was the best of all the archers and the Minuai crowned him with an olive crown; and so, the songs say, the soul of good Cyzicus was appeased, and the heroes went on their way in peace.

But when Cyzicus's wife heard that he was dead, she died likewise of grief; and her tears became a fountain of clear water, which flows the whole year round.

Then they rowed away, the songs say, along the Mysian shore, and past the mouth of Rhindacus, till they found a pleasant bay, sheltered by the long ridges of Arganthus, and by high walls of basalt rock. And there they ran the ship ashore upon the yellow sand, and furled the sail, and took the mast down, and lashed it in its crutch. And next they let down the ladder, and went ashore to sport and rest.

And there Heracles went away into the woods, bow in hand, to hunt wild deer; and Hylas the fair boy slept away after him, and followed him by stealth, until he lost himself among the glens, and sat down weary to rest himself by the side of a lake; and there the water nymphs came up to look at him, and loved him, and carried him down under the lake to be their playfellow, forever happy and young. And Heracles sought for him in vain, shouting his name till all the mountains rang; but Hylas never heard him, far down under the sparkling lake. So while Heracles wandered searching for him, a fair breeze sprang up, and Heracles was nowhere to be

found ; and the Argo sailed away, and Heracles was left behind, and never saw the noble Phasian stream.

Then the Minuai came to a doleful land, where Amycus the giant ruled, and cared nothing for the laws of Zeus, but challenged all strangers to box with him, and those whom he conquered he slew. But Polydeuces the boxer struck him a harder blow than he ever felt before, and slew him ; and the Minuai went on up the Bosphorus, till they came to the city of Phineus, the fierce Bithynian king ; for Zetes and Calais bade Jason land there, because they had a work to do.

And they went up from the shore toward the city, through forests white with snow ; and Phineus came out to meet them with a lean and woful face, and said, "Welcome, gallant heroes, to the land of bitter blasts, a land of cold and misery ; yet I will feast you as best I can." And he led them in, and set meat before them ; but before they could put their hands to their mouths, down came two fearful monsters, the like of whom man never saw ; for they had the faces and the hair of fair maidens, but the wings and claws of hawks ; and they snatched the meat from off the table, and flew shrieking out above the roofs.

Then Phineus beat his breast and cried, "These are the Harpies whose names are the Whirlwind and the Swift, the daughters of Wonder and of the Amber-nymph, and they rob us night and day. They carried off the daughters of Pandareus, whom all the Gods had blest ; for Aphrodite fed them on Olympus with honey and milk and wine ; and Hera gave them beauty and wisdom, and Athene skill in all the arts ; but when they came to their wedding, the Harpies snatched them both away, and gave them to be slaves to the Erinnues, and live in horror all their days. And now they haunt me, and my people, and the Bosphorus, with fearful storms ; and

sweep away our food from off our tables, so that we starve in spite of all our wealth."

Then up rose Zetes and Calais, the winged sons of the North-wind, and said, "Do you not know us, Phineus, and these wings which grow upon our backs?" And Phineus hid his face in terror; but he answered not a word.

"Because you have been a traitor, Phineus, the Harpies hunt you night and day. Where is Cleopatra our sister, your wife, whom you keep in prison? and where are her two children whom you blinded in your rage, at the bidding of an evil woman, and cast them out upon the rocks? Swear to us that you will right our sister, and cast out that wicked woman; and then we will free you from your plague, and drive the whirlwind maidens from the south: but if not, we will put out your eyes, as you put out the eyes of your own sons."

Then Phineus swore an oath to them, and drove out the wicked woman; and Jason took those two poor children, and cured their eyes with magic herbs.

But Zetes and Calais rose up sadly, and said, "Farewell now, heroes all; farewell our dear companions, with whom we played on Pelion in old times; for a fate is laid upon us, and our day is come at last, in which we may hunt the whirlwinds, over land and sea forever; and if we catch them they die, and if not, we die ourselves."

At that all the heroes wept: but the two young men sprang up, and aloft into the air after the Harpies, and the battle of the winds began.

The heroes trembled in silence as they heard the shrieking of the blasts; while the palace rocked and all the city, and great stones were torn from the crags, and the forest-pines were hurled eastward, north and south and

east and west, and the Bosphorus boiled white with foam, and the clouds were dashed against the cliffs.

But at last the battle ended, and the Harpies fled screaming toward the south, and the sons of the Northwind rushed after them, and brought clear sunshine where they passed. For many a league they followed them, over all the isles of the Cyclades, and away to the southwest across Hellas, till they came to the Ionian sea, and there they fell upon the Echinades, at the mouth of the Achelous ; and those isles were called the Whirlwind Isles for many a hundred years. But what became of Zetes and Calais I know not ; for the heroes never saw them again : and some say that Heracles met them, and quarrelled with them, and slew them with his arrows ; and some say that they fell down from weariness and the heat of the summer sun, and that the Sun-god buried them among the Cyclades, in the pleasant Isle of Tenos ; and for many hundred years their grave was shown there, and over it a pillar, which turned to every wind. But those dark storms and whirlwinds haunt the Bosphorus until this day.

But the Argonauts went eastward, and out into the open sea, which we now call the Black Sea, but it was called the Euxine then. No Hellen had ever crossed it, and all feared that dreadful sea, and its rocks, and shoals, and fogs, and bitter freezing storms ; and they told strange stories of it, some false and some half true, how it stretched northward to the ends of the earth, and the sluggish Putrid Sea, and the everlasting night, and the regions of the dead. So the heroes trembled, for all their courage, as they came into that wild Black Sea, and saw it stretching out before them, without a shore, as far as eye could see.

And first Orpheus spoke, and warned them,—“ We shall come now to the wandering blue rocks ; my mother warned me of them, Calliope, the immortal muse.”

And soon they saw the blue rocks shining, like spires and castles of gray glass, while an ice-cold wind blew from them, and chilled all the heroes' hearts. And as they neared, they could see them heaving, as they rolled upon the long sea-waves, crashing and grinding together, till the roar went up to heaven. The sea sprang up in spouts between them, and swept round them in white sheets of foam ; but their heads swung nodding high in air, while the wind whistled shrill among the crags.

The heroes' hearts sank within them, and they lay upon their oars in fear ; but Orpheus called to Tiphys the helmsman—"Between them we must pass ; so look ahead for an opening, and be brave, for Hera is with us." But Tiphys the cunning helmsman stood silent, clenching his teeth, till he saw a heron come flying mast-high toward the rocks, and hover awhile before them, as if looking for a passage through. Then he cried, "Hera has sent us a pilot ; let us follow the cunning bird."

Then the heron flapped to and fro a moment, till he saw a hidden gap, and into it he rushed like an arrow, while the heroes watched what would befall.

And the blue rocks clashed together as the bird fled swiftly through ; but they struck but a feather from his tail, and then rebounded apart at the shock.

Then Tiphys cheered the heroes, and they shouted ; and the oars bent like withes beneath their strokes, as they rushed between those toppling ice-crags, and the cold blue lips of death. And ere the rocks could meet again they had passed them, and were safe out in the open sea.

And after that they sailed on wearily along the Asian coast, by the Black Cape and Thyneis, where the hot stream of Thymbris falls into the sea, and Sangarius, whose waters float on the Euxine, till they came to Wolf the river, and to Wolf the kindly king. And there died two brave heroes, Idmon and Tiphys the wise helmsman ;

one died of an evil sickness, and one a wild boar slew. So the heroes heaped a mound above them, and set upon it an oar on high, and left them there to sleep together, on the far-off Lycian shore. But Idas killed the boar, and avenged Tiphys ; and Ancaios took the rudder and was helmsman, and steered them on toward the east.

And they went on past Sinope, and many a mighty river's mouth, and past many a barbarous tribe, and the cities of the Amazons, the warlike women of the East, till all night they heard the clank of anvils and the roar of furnace-blasts, and the forge-fires shone like sparks through the darkness, in the mountain glens aloft ; for they were come to the shores of the Chalybes, the smiths who never tire, but serve Ares the cruel War-god, forging weapons day and night.

And at day-dawn they looked eastward, and midway between the sea and the sky they saw white snow-peaks hanging, glittering sharp and bright above the clouds. And they knew that they were come to Caucasus, at the end of all the earth ; Caucasus the highest of all mountains, the father of the rivers of the East. On his peak lies chained the Titan, while a vulture tears his heart ; and at his feet are piled dark forests round the magic Colchian land.

And they rowed three days to the eastward while Caucasus rose higher hour by hour, till they saw the dark stream of Phasis rushing headlong to the sea, and shining above the tree-tops, the golden roofs of king Aietes, the child of the sun.

Then out spoke Ancaios the helmsman, " We are come to our goal at last ; for there are the roofs of Aietes, and the woods where all poisons grow ; but who can tell us where among them is hid the golden fleece ? Many a toil must we bear ere we find it, and bring it home to Greece."

But Jason cheered the heroes, for his heart was high and bold ; and he said, "I will go alone up to Aietes, though he be the child of the sun, and win him with soft words. Better so than to go altogether, and to come to blows at once." But the Minuiai would not stay behind, so they rowed boldly up the stream.

And a dream came to Aietes, and filled his heart with fear. He thought he saw a shining star, which fell into his daughter's lap ; and that Medeia his daughter took it gladly, and carried it to the river-side, and cast it in, and there the whirling river bore it down, and out into the Euxine Sea.

Then he leapt up in fear, and bade his servants bring his chariot, that he might go down to the river-side and appease the nymphs, and the heroes whose spirits haunt the bank. So he went down in his golden chariot, and his daughters by his side, Medeia the fair witch-maiden, and Chalciopé, who had been Phrixus's wife, and behind him a crowd of servants and soldiers, for he was a rich and mighty prince.

And as he drove down by the reedy river, he saw Argo sliding up beneath the bank, and many a hero in her, like Immortals for beauty and for strength, as their weapons glittered round them in the level morning sunlight, through the white mist of the stream. But Jason was the noblest of all ; for Hera who loved him gave him beauty, and tallness, and terrible manhood.

And when they came near together and looked into each other's eyes, the heroes were awed before Aietes as he shone in his chariot, like his father the glorious Sun ; for his robes were of rich gold tissue, and the rays of his diadem flashed fire ; and in his hand he bore a jewelled sceptre, which glittered like the stars ; and sternly he looked at them under his brows, and sternly he spoke, and loud—

“Who are you, and what want you here, that you come to the shore of Cutaia? Do you take no account of my rule, nor of my people the Colchians who serve me, who never tired yet in the battle, and know well how to face an invader?”

And the heroes sat silent awhile before the face of that ancient king. But Hera the awful goddess put courage into Jason's heart, and he rose and shouted loudly in answer, “We are no pirates nor lawless men. We come not to plunder and to ravage, or carry away slaves from your land; but my uncle, the son of Poseidon, Pelias the Minuan king, he it is who has set me on a quest to bring home the golden fleece. And these, too, my bold comrades, they are no nameless men; for some are the sons of Immortals, and some of heroes far renowned. And we too never tire in battle, and know well how to give blows and to take; yet we wish to be guests at your table; it will be better so for both.”

Then Aietes's rage rushed up like a whirlwind, and his eyes flashed fire as he heard; but he crushed his anger down in his breast, and spoke mildly a cunning speech,—

“If you will fight for the fleece with my Colchians, then many a man must die. But do you indeed expect to win from me the fleece in fight? So few you are, that if you be worsted, I can load your ship with your corpses. But if you will be ruled by me, you will find it better far to choose the best man among you, and let him fulfil the labors which I demand. Then I will give him the golden fleece for a prize and a glory to you all.”

So saying, he turned his horses and drove back in silence to the town. And the Minuai sat silent with sorrow, and longed for Heracles and his strength; for there was no facing the thousands of the Colchians, and the fearful chance of war.

But Chalciopé, Phrixus's widow, went weeping to the

town ; for she remembered her Minuan husband, and all the pleasures of her youth, while she watched the fair faces of his kinsmen, and their long locks of golden hair. And she whispered to Medeia her sister—"Why should all these brave men die? why does not my father give them up the fleece, that my husband's spirit may have rest?"

And Medeia's heart pitied the heroes, and Jason most of all ; and she answered, "Our father is stern and terrible, and who can win the golden fleece?" But Chalciope said, "These men are not like our men ; there is nothing which they cannot dare nor do."

And Medeia thought of Jason and his brave countenance, and said, "If there was one among them who knew no fear, I could show him how to win the fleece."

So in the dusk of evening they went down to the river-side, Chalciope and Medeia the witch-maiden, and Argus, Phrixus's son. And Argus, the boy, crept forward, among the beds of reeds, till he came where the heroes were sleeping, on the thwarts of the ship, beneath the bank, while Jason kept ward on shore, and leant upon his lance full of thought. And the boy came to Jason, and said—

"I am the son of Phrixus, your cousin ; and Chalciope my mother waits for you, to talk about the golden fleece."

Then Jason went boldly with the boy, and found the two princesses standing ; and when Chalciope saw him, she wept, and took his hands, and cried—

"O cousin of my beloved, go home before you die !"

"It would be base to go home now, fair princess, and to have sailed all these seas in vain." Then both the princesses besought him : but Jason said, "It is too late."

"But you know not," said Medeia, "what he must do who would win the fleece. He must tame the two brazen-footed bulls, who breathe devouring flame ; and

with them he must plough ere nightfall four acres in the field of Ares ; and he must sow them with serpents' teeth, of which each tooth springs up into an armed man. Then he must fight with all those warriors ; and little will it profit him to conquer them ; for the fleece is guarded by a serpent, more huge than any mountain pine ; and over his body you must step, if you would reach the golden fleece."

Then Jason laughed bitterly. "Unjustly is that fleece kept here, and by an unjust and lawless king ; and unjustly shall I die in my youth, for I will attempt it ere another sun be set."

Then Medeia trembled, and said, "No mortal man can reach that fleece, unless I guide him through. For round it, beyond the river, is a wall full nine ells high, with lofty towers and buttresses, and mighty gates of threefold brass ; and over the gates the wall is arched, with golden battlements above. And over the gateway sits Brimo, the wild witch-huntress of the woods, brandishing a pine-torch in her hands, while her mad hounds howl around. No man dare meet her or look on her, but only I her priestess, and she watches far and wide lest any stranger should come near."

"No wall so high but it may be climbed at last, and no wood so thick but it may be crawled through ; no serpent so wary but he may be charmed, or witch-queen so fierce but spells may soothe her ; and I may yet win the golden fleece, if a wise maiden help bold men."

And he looked at Medeia cunningly, and held her with his glittering eye, till she blushed and trembled, and said,—

"Who can face the fire of the bulls' breath, and fight ten thousand armed men ?"

"He whom you help," said Jason, flattering her, "for your fame is spread over all the earth. Are you not the

queen of all enchantresses, wiser even than your sister Circe, in her fairy island in the West?"

"Would that I were with my sister Circe in her fairy island in the West, far away from sore temptation, and thoughts which tear the heart! But if it must be so—for why should you die?—I have an ointment here; I made it from the magic ice-flower which sprang from Prometheus's wound, above the clouds on Caucasus, in the dreary fields of snow. Anoint yourself with that, and you shall have in you seven men's strength; and anoint your shield with it, and neither fire nor sword can harm you. But what you begin you must end before sunset, for its virtue lasts only one day. And anoint your helmet with it before you sow the serpents' teeth; and when the sons of earth spring up, cast your helmet among their ranks, and the deadly crop of the War-god's field will mow itself, and perish."

Then Jason fell on his knees before her, and thanked her and kissed her hands; and she gave him the vase of ointment, and fled trembling through the reeds. And Jason told his comrades what had happened, and showed them the box of ointment; and all rejoiced but Idas, and he grew mad with envy.

And at sunrise Jason went and bathed, and anointed himself from head to foot, and his shield, and his helmet, and his weapons, and bade his comrades try the spell. So they tried to bend his lance, but it stood like an iron bar; and Idas in spite hewed at it with his sword, but the blade flew to splinters in his face. Then they hurled their lances at his shield, but the spear-points turned like lead; and Caineus tried to throw him, but he never stirred a foot; and Polydeuces struck him with his fist, a blow which would have killed an ox; but Jason only smiled, and the heroes danced about him with delight; and he leapt and ran, and shouted, in the joy of that enormous

strength, till the sun rose, and it was time to go and to claim Aietes's promise.

So he sent up Telamon and Aithalides to tell Aietes that he was ready for the fight ; and they went up among the marble walls, and beneath the roofs of gold, and stood in Aietes's hall, while he grew pale with rage.

"Fulfil your promise to us, child of the blazing sun. Give us the serpents' teeth, and let loose the fiery bulls ; for we have found a champion among us who can win the golden fleece."

And Aietes bit his lips, for he fancied that they had fled away by night ; but he could not go back from his promise ; so he gave them the serpents' teeth.

Then he called for his chariot and his horses, and sent heralds through all the town ; and all the people went out with him to the dreadful War-god's field.

And there Aietes sat upon his throne, with his warriors on each hand, thousands and tens of thousands, clothed from head to foot in steel-chain mail. And the people and the women crowded to every window, and bank, and wall ; while the Minuai stood together, a mere handful in the midst of that great host.

And Chalciope was there and Argus, trembling, and Medeia, wrapped closely in her veil ; but Aietes did not know that she was muttering cunning spells between her lips.

Then Jason cried, "Fulfil your promise, and let your fiery bulls come forth."

Then Aietes bade open the gates, and the magic bulls leapt out. Their brazen hoofs rang upon the ground, and their nostrils sent out sheets of flame, as they rushed with lowered heads upon Jason ; but he never flinched a step. The flame of their breath swept round him, but it singed not a hair of his head ; and the bulls stopped short and trembled, when Medeia began her spell.

Then Jason sprang upon the nearest, and seized him by the horn ; and up and down they wrestled, till the bull fell grovelling on his knees ; for the heart of the brute died within him, and his mighty limbs were loosed, beneath the steadfast eye of that dark witch-maiden, and the magic whisper of her lips.

So both the bulls were tamed and yoked ; and Jason bound them to the plough, and goaded them onward with his lance, till he had ploughed the sacred field.

And all the Minuai shouted ; but Aietes bit his lips with rage ; for the half of Jason's work was over, and the sun was yet high in heaven.

Then he took the serpents' teeth and sowed them, and waited what would befall. But Medeia looked at him and at his helmet, lest he should forget the lesson she had taught.

And every furrow heaved and bubbled, and out of every clod rose a man. Out of the earth they rose by thousands, each clad from head to foot in steel, and drew their swords and rushed on Jason, where he stood in the midst alone.

Then the Minuai grew pale with fear for him ; but Aietes laughed a bitter laugh. "See ! if I had not warriors enough already round me, I could call them out of the bosom of the earth."

But Jason snatched off his helmet, and hurled it into the thickest of the throng. And blind madness came upon them, suspicion, hate, and fear ; and one cried to his fellow, "Thou didst strike me !" and another, "Thou art Jason ; thou shalt die !" So fury seized those earth-born phantoms, and each turned his hand against the rest ; and they fought and were never weary, till they all lay dead upon the ground. Then the magic furrows opened, and the kind earth took them home into her breast ; and the grass grew up all green again above them, and Jason's work was done.

Then the Minuai rose and shouted, till Prometheus heard them from his crag. And Jason cried—"Lead me to the fleece this moment, before the sun goes down."

But Aietes thought—"He has conquered the bulls; and sown and reaped the deadly crop. Who is this who is proof against all magic? He may kill the serpent yet." So he delayed, and sat taking counsel with his princes, till the sun went down and all was dark. Then he bade a herald cry, "Every man to his home for to-night. To-morrow we will meet these heroes, and speak about the golden fleece."

Then he turned and looked at Medeia: "This is your doing, false witch-maid! You have helped these yellow-haired strangers, and brought shame upon your father and yourself!"

Medeia shrank and trembled, and her face grew pale with fear; and Aietes knew that she was guilty, and whispered, "If they win the fleece, you die!"

But the Minuai marched toward their ship, growling like lions cheated of their prey; for they saw that Aietes meant to mock them, and to cheat them out of all their toil. And Oileus said, "Let us go to the grove together, and take the fleece by force."

And Idas the rash cried, "Let us draw lots who shall go in first; for while the dragon is devouring one, the rest can slay him, and carry off the fleece in peace." But Jason held them back, though he praised them; for he hoped for Medeia's help.

And after awhile Medeia came trembling, and wept a long while before she spoke. And at last,—

"My end is come, and I must die; for my father has found out that I have helped you. You he would kill if he dared; but he will not harm you, because you have been his guests. Go then, go, and remember poor

Medeia when you are far away across the sea." But all the heroes cried—

"If you die, we die with you; for without you we cannot win the fleece, and home we will not go without it, but fall here fighting to the last man."

"You need not die," said Jason. "Flee home with us across the sea. Show us first how to win the fleece; for you can do it. Why else are you the priestess of the grove? Show us but how to win the fleece, and come with us, and you shall be my queen, and rule over the rich princes of the Minuai, in Iolcos by the sea."

And all the heroes pressed round, and vowed to her that she should be their queen.

Medeia wept, and shuddered, and hid her face in her hands; for her heart yearned after her sisters and her play-fellows, and the home where she was brought up as a child. But at last she looked up at Jason, and spoke between her sobs,—

"Must I leave my home and my people, to wander with strangers across the sea? The lot is cast, and I must endure it. I will show you how to win the golden fleece. Bring up your ship to the woodside, and moor her there against the bank; and let Jason come up at midnight, and one brave comrade with him, and meet me beneath the wall."

Then all the heroes cried together—"I will go!" "and I!" "and I!" And Idas the rash grew mad with envy; for he longed to be foremost in all things. But Medeia calmed them, and said, "Orpheus shall go with Jason, and bring his magic harp; for I hear of him that he is the king of all minstrels, and can charm all things on earth."

And Orpheus laughed for joy, and clapped his hands, because the choice had fallen on him; for in those days poets and singers were as bold warriors as the best.

So at midnight they went up the bank, and found Medeia ; and beside came Absyrtus her young brother, leading a yearling lamb.

Then Medeia brought them to a thicket, beside the War-god's gate ; and there she bade Jason dig a ditch, and kill the lamb and leave it there, and strew on it magic herbs and honey from the honey-comb.

Then sprang up through the earth with the red fire flashing before her, Brimo the wild witch-huntress, while her mad hounds howled around. She had one head like a horse's and another like a ravening hound's, and another like a hissing snake's, and a sword in either hand. And she leapt into the ditch with her hounds, and they ate and drank their fill, while Jason and Orpheus trembled, and Medeia hid her eyes. And at last the witch-queen vanished, and fled with her hounds into the woods ; and the bars of the gates fell down, and the brazen doors flew wide, and Medeia and the heroes ran forward and hurried through the poison wood, among the dark stems of the mighty beeches, guided by the gleam of the golden fleece, until they saw it hanging on one vast tree in the midst. And Jason would have sprung to seize it : but Medeia held him back, and pointed shuddering to the tree-foot, where the mighty serpent lay, coiled in and out among the roots, with a body like a mountain-pine. His coils stretched many a fathom, spangled with bronze and gold ; and half of him they could see, but no more ; for the rest lay in the darkness far beyond.

And when he saw them coming, he lifted up his head, and watched them with his small bright eyes, and flashed his forked tongue, and roared like the fire among the woodlands, till the forest tossed and groaned. For his cry shook the trees from leaf to root, and swept over the long reaches of the river, and over Æetes's hall, and woke

the sleepers in the city, till mothers clasped their children in their fear.

But Medeia called gently to him ; and he stretched out his long spotted neck, and licked her hand, and looked up in her face, as if to ask for food. Then she made a sign to Orpheus, and he began his magic song.

And as he sung, the forest grew calm again, and the leaves on every tree hung still ; and the serpent's head sank down, and his brazen coils grew limp, and his glittering eyes closed lazily, till he breathed as gently as a child, while Orpheus called to pleasant Slumber, who gives peace to men, and beasts, and waves.

Then Jason leapt forward warily, and stepped across that mighty snake, and tore the fleece from off the tree-trunk ; and the four rushed down the garden, to the bank where the *Argo* lay.

There was a silence for a moment, while Jason held the golden fleece on high. Then he cried—"Go now, good *Argo*, swift and steady, if ever you would see Pelion more."

And she went, as the heroes drove her, grim and silent all, with muffled oars, till the pine-wood bent like willow in their hands, and stout *Argo* groaned beneath their strokes.

On and on, beneath the dewy darkness, they fled swiftly down the swirling stream ; underneath black walls, and temples, and the castles of the princes of the East ; past sluice-mouths, and fragrant gardens, and groves of all strange fruits ; past marshes where fat kine lay sleeping, and long beds of whispering reeds ; till they heard the merry music of the surge upon the bar, as it tumbled in the moonlight all alone.

Into the surge they rushed, and *Argo* leapt the breakers like a horse ; for she knew the time was come to show her mettle, and win honor for the heroes and herself.

Into the surge they rushed, and Argo leapt the breakers like a horse, till the heroes stopped all panting, each man upon his oar, as she slid into the still broad sea.

Then Orpheus took his harp and sang a pæan, till the heroes' hearts rose high again ; and they rowed on stoutly and steadfastly, away into the darkness of the West.

PART V.

HOW THE ARGONAUTS WERE DRIVEN INTO THE UNKNOWN SEA.

So they fled away in haste to the westward : but Aietes manned his fleet and followed them. And Lynceus the quick-eyed saw him coming, while he was still many a mile away, and cried, "I see a hundred ships, like a flock of white swans, far in the east." And at that they rowed hard, like heroes ; but the ships came nearer every hour.

Then Medeia, the dark witch-maiden, laid a cruel and a cunning plot ; for she killed Absyrtus her young brother, and cast him into the sea, and said, "Ere my father can take up his corpse and bury it, he must wait long, and be left far behind."

And all the heroes shuddered, and looked one at the other for shame ; yet they did not punish that dark witch-woman, because she had won for them the golden fleece.

And when Aietes came to the place, he saw the floating corpse ; and he stopped a long while, and bewailed his son, and took him up, and went home. But he sent on his sailors toward the westward, and bound them by a mighty curse : "Bring back to me that dark witch-woman, that she may die a dreadful death. But if you return without her, you shall die by the same death yourselves.

So the Argonauts escaped for that time : but Father Zeus saw that foul crime ; and out of the heavens he sent a storm, and swept the ship far from her course. Day after day the storm drove her, amid foam and blinding

mist, till they knew no longer where they were, for the sun was blotted from the skies. And at last the ship struck on a shoal, amid low isles of mud and sand, and the waves rolled over her and through her, and the heroes lost all hope of life.

Then Jason cried to Hera : "Fair queen, who hast befriended us till now, why hast thou left us in our misery, to die here among unknown seas ? It is hard to lose the honor which we have won with such toil and danger, and hard never to see Hellas again, and the pleasant bay of Pagasai."

Then out and spoke the magic bough which stood upon the Argo's beak : "Because Father Zeus is angry, all this has fallen on you ; for a cruel crime has been done on board, and the sacred ship is foul with blood."

At that some of the heroes cried : "Medeia is the murderess. Let the witch-woman bear hersin, and die !" And they seized Medeia, to hurl her into the sea and atone for the young boy's death : but the magic bough spoke again : "Let her live till her crimes are full. Vengeance waits for her, slow and sure ; but she must live, for you need her still. She must show you the way to her sister Circe, who lives among the islands of the West. To her you must sail, a weary way, and she shall cleanse you from your guilt."

Then all the heroes wept aloud when they heard the sentence of the oak ; for they knew that a dark journey lay before them, and years of bitter toil. And some upbraided the dark witch-woman, and some said, "Nay, we are her debtors still ; without her we should never have won the fleece." But most of them bit their lips in silence, for they feared the witch's spells.

And now the sea grew calmer, and the sun shone out once more, and the heroes thrust the ship off the sand-bank, and rowed forward on their weary course, under

the guiding of the dark witch-maiden, into the wastes of the unknown sea.

Whither they went I cannot tell, nor how they came to Circe's isle. Some say that they went to the westward, and up the Ister* stream, and so came into the Adriatic, dragging their ship over the snowy Alps. And others say that they went southward, into the Red Indian Sea, and past the sunny lands where spices grow, round Æthiopia toward the West; and that at last they came to Libya, and dragged their ship across the burning sands, and over the hills into the Syrtes, where the flats and quicksands spread for many a mile, between rich Cyrene and the Lotus-eaters' shore. But all these are but dreams and fables, and dim hints of unknown lands.

But all say that they came to a place where they had to drag their ship across the land nine days with ropes and rollers, till they came into an unknown sea. And the best of all the old songs tell us, how they went away toward the North, till they came to the slope of Caucasus, where it sinks into the sea; and to the narrow Cimmerian Bosphorus,† where the Titan swam across upon the bull; and thence into the lazy waters of the still Mæotid lake.‡ And thence they went northward ever, up the Tanais, which we call Don, past the Geloni and Sauromatai, and many a wandering shepherd-tribe, and the one-eyed Arimaspi, of whom old Greek poets tell, who steal the gold from the Griffins, in the cold Rhiphaian§ hills.

And they passed the Scythian archers, and the Tauri who eat men, and the wandering Hyperboreai, who feed their flocks beneath the pole-star, until they came into the northern ocean, the dull dead Cronian Sea.¶ And there Argo would move on no longer; and each man clasped

* The Danube.

† Between the Crimæa and Circassia.

‡ The Sea of Azov.

§ The Ural Mountains?

¶ The Baltic?

his elbow, and leaned his head upon his hand, heart-broken with toil and hunger, and gave himself up to death. But brave Ancaios the helmsman cheered up their hearts once more, and bade them leap on land, and haul the ship with ropes and rollers for many a weary day, whether over land, or mud, or ice, I know not, for the song is mixed and broken like a dream. And it says next, how they came to the rich nation of the famous long-lived men; and to the coast of the Cimmerians, who never saw the sun, buried deep in the glens of the snow mountains; and to the fair land of Hermione, where dwelt the most righteous of all nations; and to the gates of the world below, and to the dwelling-place of dreams.

And at last Ancaios shouted—"Endure a little while, brave friends, the worst is surely past; for I can see the pure west wind ruffle the water, and hear the roar of ocean on the sands. So raise up the mast, and set the sail, and face what comes like men."

Then out spoke the magic bough—"Ah, would that I had perished long ago, and been whelmed by the dread blue rocks, beneath the fierce swell of the Euxine! Better so, than to wander forever, disgraced by the guilt of my princes; for the blood of Absyrtus still tracks me, and woe follows hard upon woe. And now some dark horror will clutch me, if I come near the Isle of Ierne.* Unless you will cling to the land, and sail southward and southward forever, I shall wander beyond the Atlantic, to the ocean which has no shore."

Then they blest the magic bough, and sailed southward along the land. But ere they could pass Ierne, the land of mists and storms, the wild wind came down, dark and roaring, and caught the sail, and strained the ropes. And away they drove twelve nights, on the wide wild western sea, through the foam, and over the rollers, while

* Britain?

they saw neither sun nor stars. And they cried again, "We shall perish, for we know not where we are. We are lost in the dreary damp darkness, and cannot tell north from south."

But Lynceus the long-sighted called gayly from the bows—"Take heart again, brave sailors ; for I see a pine-clad isle, and the halls of the kind Earth-mother, with a crown of clouds around them."

But Orpheus said, "Turn from them, for no living man can land there : there is no harbor on the coast, but steep-walled cliffs all round."

So Ancaios turned the ship away ; and for three days more they sailed on, till they came to Aiaia, Circe's home, and the fairy island of the West.*

And there Jason bid them land, and seek about for any sign of living man. And as they went inland, Circe met them, coming down toward the ship ; and they trembled when they saw her ; for her hair, and face, and robes, shone like flame.

And she came and looked at Medeia ; and Medeia hid her face beneath her veil.

And Circe cried, "Ah, wretched girl, have you forgotten all your sins, that you come hither to my island, where the flowers bloom all the year round ? Where is your aged father, and the brother whom you killed ? Little do I expect you to return in safety with these strangers whom you love. I will send you food and wine : but your ship must not stay here, for it is foul with sin, and foul with sin its crew."

And the heroes prayed her, but in vain, and cried, "Cleanse us from our guilt !" But she sent them away and said, "Go on to Malea, and there you may be cleansed, and return home."

Then a fair wind rose, and they sailed eastward, by

* The Azores ?

Tartessus on the Iberian shore, till they came to the Pillars of Hercules, and the Mediterranean Sea. And thence they sailed on through the deeps of Sardinia, and past the Ausonian islands, and the capes of the Tyrrhenian shore, till they came to a flowery island, upon a still bright summer's eve. And as they neared it, slowly and wearily, they heard sweet songs upon the shore. But when Medeia heard it, she started, and cried, "Beware, all heroes, for these are the rocks of the Sirens, You must pass close by them, for there is no other channel ; but those who listen to that song are lost."

Then Orpheus spoke, the king of all minstrels—"Let them match their song against mine. I have charmed stones, and trees, and dragons, how much more the hearts of man !" So he caught up his lyre, and stood upon the poop, and began his magic song.

And now they could see the Sirens, on Anthemousa, the flowery isle ; three fair maidens sitting on the beach, beneath a red rock in the setting sun, among beds of crimson poppies and golden asphodel. Slowly they sung and sleepily, with silver voices, mild and clear, which stole over the golden waters, and into the hearts of all the heroes, in spite of Orpheus's song.

And all things stayed around and listened ; the gulls sat in white lines along the rocks ; on the beach great seals lay basking, and kept time with lazy heads ; while silver shoals of fish came up to hearken, and whispered as they broke the shining calm. The Wind overhead hushed his whistling, as he shepherded his clouds toward the west ; and the clouds stood in mid blue, and listened dreaming, like a flock of golden sheep.

And as the heroes listened, the oars fell from their hands, and their heads drooped on their breasts, and they closed their heavy eyes ; and they dreamed of bright still gardens, and of slumbers under murmuring pines, till all

their toil seemed foolishness, and they thought of their renown no more.

Then one lifted his head suddenly, and cried, "What use in wandering forever? Let us stay here and rest awhile." And another, "Let us row to the shore, and hear the words they sing." And another, "I care not for the words, but for the music. They shall sing me to sleep, that I may rest."

And Butes, the son of Pandion, the fairest of all mortal men, leapt out and swam toward the shore, crying, "I come, I come, fair maidens, to live and die here, listening to your song."

Then Medeia clapped her hands together, and cried, "Sing louder, Orpheus, sing a bolder strain; wake up these hapless sluggards, or none of them will see the land of Hellas more."

Then Orpheus lifted his harp, and crashed his cunning hand across the strings; and his music and his voice rose like a trumpet through the still evening air; into the air it rushed like thunder, till the rocks rang and the sea; and into their souls it rushed like wine, till all hearts beat fast within their breasts.

And he sung the song of Perseus, how the Gods led him over land and sea, and how he slew the loathly Gorgon, and won himself a peerless bride; and how he sits now with the Gods upon Olympus, a shining star in the sky, immortal with his immortal bride, and honored by all men below.

So Orpheus sang, and the Sirens, answering each other across the golden sea, till Orpheus's voice drowned the Sirens, and the heroes caught their oars again.

And they cried, "We will be men like Perseus, and we will dare and suffer to the last. Sing us his song again, brave Orpheus, that we may forget the Sirens and their spell."

And as Orpheus sang, they dashed their oars into the sea, and kept time to his music, as they fled fast away ; and the Sirens' voices died behind them, in the hissing of the foam along their wake.

But Butes swam to the shore, and knelt down before the Sirens, and cried, "Sing on ! sing on !" But he could say no more ; for a charmed sleep came over him, and a pleasant humming in his ears ; and he sank all along upon the pebbles, and forgot all heaven and earth, and never looked at that sad beach around him, all strewn with the bones of men.

Then slowly rose up those three fair sisters, with a cruel smile upon their lips ; and slowly they crept down towards him, like leopards who creep upon their prey ; and their hands were like the talons of eagles, as they stept across the bones of their victims to enjoy their cruel feast.

But fairest Aphrodite saw him from the highest Idalian peak, and she pitied his youth and his beauty, and leapt up from her golden throne ; and like a falling star she cleft the sky, and left a trail of glittering light, till she stooped to the Isle of the Sirens, and snatched their prey from their claws. And she lifted Butes as he lay sleeping, and wrapt him in a golden mist ; and she bore him to the peak of Lilybæum ; and he slept there many a pleasant year.

But when the Sirens saw that they were conquered, they shrieked for envy and rage, and leapt from the beach into the sea, and were changed into rocks until this day.

Then they came to the straits by Lilybæum, and saw Sicily, the three-cornered island, under which Enceladus the giant lies groaning day and night, and when he turns the earth quakes, and his breath bursts out in roaring flames from the highest cone of Ætna, above the chestnut woods. And there Charybdis caught them in

its fearful coils of wave, and rolled mast-high about them, and spun them round and round; and they could go neither back nor forward, while the whirlpool sucked them in.

And while they struggled they saw near them, on the other side the strait, a rock stand in the water, with a peak wrapt round in clouds; a rock which no man could climb, though he had twenty hands and feet, for the stone was smooth and slippery, as if polished by man's hand; and half way up a misty cave looked out towards the west.

And when Orpheus saw it, he groaned, and struck his hands together. And "Little will it help to us," he cried, "to escape the jaws of the whirlpool; for in that cave lives Scylla, the sea-hag with a young whelp's voice; my mother warned me of her ere we sailed away from Hellas; she has six heads, and six long necks, and hides in that dark cleft. And from her cave she fishes for all things which pass by, for sharks, and seals, and dolphins, and all the herds of Amphitrite. And never ship's crew boasted that they came safe by her rock; for she bends her long necks down to them, and every mouth takes up a man. And who will help us now? For Hera and Zeus hate us, and our ship is foul with guilt; so we must die, whatever befalls."

Then out of the depths came Thetis, Peleus's silver-footed bride, for love of her gallant husband, and all her nymphs around her; and they played like snow-white dolphins, diving on from wave to wave, before the ship, and in her wake, and beside her, as dolphins play. And they caught the ship, and guided her, and passed her on from hand to hand, and tossed her through the billows, as maidens toss the ball. And when Scylla stooped to seize her, they struck back her ravening heads, and foul Scylla whined, as a whelp whines, at the touch of their

gentle hands. But she shrank into her cave affrighted ; for all bad things shrink from good ; and Argo leapt safe past her, while a fair breeze rose behind. Then Thetis and her nymphs sank down to their coral caves beneath the sea, and their gardens of green and purple, where live flowers bloom all the year round ; while the heroes went on rejoicing, yet dreading what might come next.

After that they rowed on steadily for many a weary day, till they saw a long high island, and beyond it a mountain land. And they searched till they found a harbor, and there rowed boldly in. But after awhile they stopped, and wondered ; for there stood a great city on the shore, and temples and walls and gardens, and castles high in air upon the cliffs. And on either side they saw a harbor, with a narrow mouth, but wide within ; and black ships without number, high and dry upon the shore.

Then Ancaios, the wise helmsman, spoke, "What new wonder is this ? I know all isles, and harbors, and the windings of all seas ; and this should be Corcyra, where a few wild goatherds dwell. But whence come these new harbors, and vast works of polished stone ?"

But Jason said, "They can be no savage people. We will go in and take our chance."

So they rowed into the harbor, among a thousand black-beaked ships, each larger far than Argo, toward a quay of polished stone. And they wondered at that mighty city, with its roofs of burnished brass, and long and lofty walls of marble, with strong palisades above. And the quays were full of people, merchants, and mariners, and slaves, going to and fro with merchandise among the crowd of ships. And the heroes' hearts were humbled, and they looked at each other and said, "We thought ourselves a gallant crew when we sailed from

Iolcos by the sea : but how small we look before this city, like an ant before a hive of bees."

Then the sailors hailed them roughly from the quay, "What men are you?—we want no strangers here, nor pirates. We keep our business to ourselves."

But Jason answered gently, with many a flattering word, and praised their city and their harbor, and their fleet of gallant ships. "Surely you are the children of Poseidon, and the masters of the sea ; and we are but poor wandering mariners, worn out with thirst and toil. Give us but food and water, and we will go on our voyage in peace."

Then the sailors laughed and answered, "Stranger, you are no fool ; you talk like an honest man, and you shall find us honest too. We are the children of Poseidon, and the masters of the sea ; but come ashore to us, and you shall have the best that we can give."

So they limped ashore, all stiff and weary, with long ragged beards and sunburnt cheeks, and garments torn and weather-stained, and weapons rusted with the spray, while the sailors laughed at them (for they were rough-tongued, though their hearts were frank and kind.) And one said, "These fellows are but raw sailors ; they look as if they had been sea-sick all the day." And another, "Their legs have grown crooked with much rowing, till they waddle in their walk like ducks."

At that Idas the rash would have struck them ; but Jason held him back, till one of the merchant kings spoke to them, a tall and stately man.

"Do not be angry, strangers ; the sailor boys must have their jest. But we will treat you justly and kindly, for strangers and poor men come from God ; and you seem no common sailors by your strength, and height, and weapons. Come up with me to the palace of Alcinous, the rich, seagoing king. and we will feast y u well

and heartily ; and after that you shall tell us your name."

But Medeia hung back, and trembled, and whispered in Jason's ear, "We are betrayed, and are going to our ruin ; for I see my countrymen among the crowd ; dark-eyed Colchi in steel mail-shirts, such as they wear in my father's land."

"It is too late to turn," said Jason. And he spoke to the merchant king—"What country is this, good sir ; and what is this new-built town ?"

"This is the land of the Phæaces, beloved by all the Immortals ; for they come hither and feast like friends with us, and sit by our side in the hall. Hither we came from Liburnia to escape the unrighteous Cyclopes ; for they robbed us, peaceful merchants, of our hard-earned wares and wealth. So Nausithous, the son of Poseidon, brought us hither, and died in peace ; and now his son Alcinous rules us, and Arete the wisest of queens."

So they went up across the square, and wondered still more as they went ; for along the quays lay in order great cables, and yards, and masts, before the fair temple of Poseidon, the blue-haired king of the seas. And round the square worked the shipwrights, as many in number as ants, twining ropes, and hewing timber, and smoothing long yards and oars. And the Minuai went on in silence through clean white marble streets, till they came to the hall of Alcinous, and they wondered then still more. For the lofty palace shone aloft in the sun, with walls of plated brass, from the threshold to the innermost chamber, and the doors were of silver and gold. And on each side of the doorway sat living dogs of gold, who never grew old or died, so well Hephaistus had made them in his forges in smoking Lemnos, and gave them to Alcinous to guard his gates by night. And within, against the walls, stood thrones on either side, down the whole length of the hall, strewn with rich glossy shawls ;

and on them the merchant kings of those crafty sea-roving Phæaces sat eating and drinking in pride, and feasting there all the year round. And boys of molten gold stood each on a polished altar, and held torches in their hands, to give light all night to the guests. And round the house sat fifty maid-servants, some grinding the meal in the mill, some turning the spindle, some weaving at the loom, while their hands twinkled as they passed the shuttle, like quivering aspen leaves.

And outside before the palace a great garden was walled round, filled full of stately fruit-trees, with olives and sweet figs, and pomegranates, pears, and apples, which bore the whole year round. For the rich southwest wind fed them, till pear grew ripe on pear, fig on fig, and grape on grape, all the winter and the spring. And at the further end gay flower-beds bloomed through all seasons of the year; and two fair fountains rose, and ran, one through the garden-grounds, and one beneath the palace gate, to water all the town. Such noble gifts the heavens had given to Alcinous the wise.

So they went in, and saw him sitting, like Poseidon, on his throne, with his golden sceptre by him, in garments stiff with gold, and in his hand a sculptured goblet, as he pledged the merchant kings; and beside him stood Arete, his wise and lovely queen, and leaned against a pillar, as she spun her golden threads.

Then Alcinous rose, and welcomed them, and bade them sit and eat; and the servants brought them tables, and bread, and meat, and wine.

But Medeia went on trembling toward Arete the fair queen, and fell at her knees, and clasped them, and cried weeping as she knelt,—

“I am your guest, fair queen, and I entreat you by Zeus from whom prayers come. Do not send me back to my father, to die some dreadful death; but let me go

my way, and bear my burden. Have I not had enough of punishment and shame ? ”

“Who are you, strange maiden ? and what is the meaning of your prayer ? ”

“I am Medeia, daughter of Aietes, and I saw my countrymen here to-day ; and I know that they are come to find me, and take me home to die some dreadful death.”

Then Arete frowned, and said—“Lead this girl in, my maidens ; and let the kings decide, not I.”

And Alcinous leapt up from his throne, and cried, “Speak, strangers, who are you ? And who is this maiden ? ”

“We are the heroes of the Minuai,” said Jason ; “and this maiden has spoken truth. We are the men who took the golden fleece, the men whose fame has run round every shore. We came hither out of the ocean, after sorrows such as man never saw before. We went out many, and come back few, for many a noble comrade have we lost. So let us go, as you should let your guests go, in peace ; that the world may say, ‘Alcinous is a just king.’ ”

But Alcinous frowned, and stood deep in thought ; and at last he spoke—

“Had not the deed been done, which is done, I should have said this day to myself, ‘It is an honor to Alcinous, and to his children after him, that the far-famed Argonauts are his guests.’ But these Colchi are my guests, as you are ; and for this month they have waited here with all their fleet ; for they have hunted all the seas of Hellas, and could not find you, and dared neither go further, nor go home.”

“Let them choose out their champions, and we will fight them, man for man.”

“No guest of ours shall fight upon our island ; and if

you go outside they will out-number you. I will do justice between you ; for I know and do what is right."

Then he turned to his kings, and said : "This may stand over till to-morrow. To-night we will feast our guests, and hear the story of all their wanderings, and how they came hither out of the ocean."

So Alcinous bade the servants take the heroes in, and bathe them, and give them clothes. And they were glad when they saw the warm water, for it was long since they had bathed. And they washed off the sea-salt from their limbs, and anointed themselves from head to foot with oil, and combed out their golden hair. Then they came back again into the hall, while the merchant-kings rose up to do them honor. And each man said to his neighbor : "No wonder that these men won fame. How they stand now like Giants, or Titans, or Immortals come down from Olympus, though many a winter has worn them, and many a fearful storm. What must they have been when they sailed from Iolcos, in the bloom of their youth, long ago?"

Then they went out to the garden ; and the merchant-princes said : "Heroes, run races with us. Let us see whose feet are nimblest."

"We cannot race against you, for our limbs are stiff from sea ; and we have lost our two swift comrades, the sons of the north wind. But do not think us cowards : if you wish to try our strength, we will shoot, and box, and wrestle, against any men on earth."

And Alcinous smiled, and answered : "I believe you, gallant guests ; with your long limbs and broad shoulders, we could never match you here. For we care nothing here for boxing, or for shooting with the bow : but for feasts, and songs, and harping, and dancing, and running races, to stretch our limbs on shore."

So they danced there and ran races, the jolly merchant kings, till the night fell, and all went in.

And then they ate and drank, and comforted their weary souls, till Alcinous called a herald, and bade him go and fetch the harper.

The herald went out, and fetched the harper, and led him in by the hand ; and Alcinous cut him a piece of meat from the fattest of the haunch, and sent it to him, and said : "Sing to us, noble harper, and rejoice the heroes' hearts."

So the harper played and sang, while the dancers danced strange figures ; and after that the tumblers showed their tricks, till the heroes laughed again.

Then, "Tell me, heroes," asked Alcinous, "you who have sailed the ocean round, and seen the manners of all nations, have you seen such dancers as ours here? or heard such music and such singing? We hold ours to be the best on earth."

"Such dancing we have never seen," said Orpheus ; "and your singer is a happy man ; for Phœbus himself must have taught him, or else he is the son of a Muse ; as I am also, and have sung once or twice, though not so well as he."

"Sing to us, then, noble stranger," said Alcinous ; "and we will give you precious gifts."

So Orpheus took his magic harp, and sang to them a stirring song of their voyage from Iolcos, and their dangers, and how they won the golden fleece ; and of Medea's love, and how she helped them, and went with them over land and sea ; and of all their fearful dangers, from monsters, and rocks, and storms, till the heart of Arete was softened, and all the women wept. And the merchant-kings rose up, each man from off his golden throne, and clapped their hands, and shouted : "Hail to the noble Argonauts, who sailed the unknown sea!"

Then he went on, and told their journey over the sluggish northern main, and through the shoreless outer ocean, to the fairy island of the west; and of the Sirens, and Scylla, and Charybdis, and all the wonders they had seen, till midnight passed, and the day dawned; but the kings never thought of sleep. Each man sat still and listened, with his chin upon his hand.

And at last when Orpheus had ended, they all went thoughtfully out, and the heroes lay down to sleep, beneath the sounding porch outside, where Arete had strewn them rugs and carpets, in the sweet still summer night.

But Arete pleaded hard with her husband for Medeia, for her heart was softened. And she said: "The Gods will punish her, not we. After all, she is our guest and my suppliant, and prayers are the daughters of Zeus. And who, too, dare part man and wife, after all they have endured together?"

And Alcinous smiled. "The minstrel's song has charmed you; but I must remember what is right; for songs cannot alter justice; and I must be faithful to my name. Alcinous I am called, the man of sturdy sense, and Alcinous I will be." But for all that, Arete besought him, until she won him round.

So next morning he sent a herald, and called the kings into the square, and said: "This is a puzzling matter; remember but one thing. These Minuiai live close by us, and we may meet them often on the seas; but Aietes lives afar off, and we have only heard his name. Which, then, of the two is it safer to offend, the men near us, or the men far off?"

The princes laughed; and praised his wisdom; and Alcinous called the heroes to the square, and the Colchi also; and they came and stood opposite each other; but Medeia stayed in the palace. Then Alcinous spoke,—

“Heroes of the Colchi, what is your errand about this lady?”

“To carry her home with us, that she may die a shameful death: but if we return without her, we must die the death she should have died.”

“What say you to this, Jason the Æolid?” said Alcinous, turning to the Minuai.

“I say,” said the cunning Jason, “that they are come here on a bootless errand. Do you think that you can make her follow you, heroes of the Colchi? her, who knows all spells and charms? She will cast away your ships on quicksands, or call down on you Brimo the wild huntress; or the chains will fall from off her wrists, and she will escape in her dragon-car: or if not thus, some other way; for she has a thousand plans and wiles. And why return home at all, brave heroes, and face the long seas again, and the Bosphorus, and the stormy Euxine, and double all your toil? There is many a fair land round these coasts, which waits for gallant men like you. Better to settle there, and build a city, and let Aietes and Colchis help themselves.”

Then a murmur rose among the Colchi, and some cried, “He has spoken well;” and some, “We have had enough of roving, we will sail the seas no more!” And the chief said at last, “Be it so, then; a plague she has been to us, and a plague to the house of her father, and a plague she will be to you. Take her, since you are no wiser; and we will sail away toward the north.”

Then Alcinous gave them food, and water, and garments, and rich presents of all sorts; and he gave the same to the Minuai, and sent them all away in peace.

So Jason kept the dark witch-maiden to breed him woe and shame: and the Colchi went northward into the Adriatic, and settled, and built towns along the shore.

Then the heroes rowed away to the eastward, to reach

Hellas their beloved land ; but a storm came down upon them, and swept them far away toward the south. And they rowed till they were spent with struggling, through the darkness and the blinding rain, but where they were they could not tell, and they gave up all hope of life. And at last they touched the ground, and when daylight came they waded to the shore ; and saw nothing round but sand, and desolate salt pools ; for they had come to the quicksands of the Syrtis, and the dreary treeless flats, which lie between Numidia and Cyrene, on the burning shore of Africa. And there they wandered starving for many a weary day, ere they could launch their ship again, and gain the open sea. And there Canthus was killed while he was trying to drive off sheep, by a stone which a herdsman threw.

And there too Mopsus died, the seer who knew the voices of all birds : but he could not foretell his own end, for he was bitten in the foot by a snake, one of those which sprang from the Gorgon's head when Perseus carried it across the sands.

At last they rowed away toward the northward, for many a weary day, till their water was spent, and their food eaten ; and they were worn out with hunger and thirst. But at last they saw a long steep island, and a blue peak high among the clouds ; and they knew it for the peak of Ida, and the famous land of Crete. And they said, "We will land in Crete, and see Minos the just king, and all his glory and his wealth ; at least he will treat us hospitably, and let us fill our water-casks upon the shore."

But when they came nearer to the island they saw a wondrous sight upon the cliffs. For on a cape to the westward stood a giant, taller than any mountain pine ; who glittered aloft against the sky like a tower of burnished brass. He turned and looked on all sides round

him, till he saw the Argo and her crew ; and when he saw them he came toward them, more swiftly than the swiftest horse, leaping across the glens at a bound, and striding at one step from down to down. And when he came abreast of them he brandished his arms up and down, as a ship hoists and lowers her yards, and shouted with his brazen throat like a trumpet from off the hills—" You are pirates, you are robbers ! If you dare land here, you die."

Then the heroes cried, " We are no pirates. We are all good men and true ; and all we ask is food and water : " but the Giant cried the more—

" You are robbers, you are pirates all ; I know you ; and if you land, you shall die the death."

Then he waved his arms again as a signal, and they saw the people flying inland, driving their flocks before them, while a great flame arose among the hills. Then the giant ran up a valley and vanished ; and the heroes lay on their oars in fear.

But Medeia stood watching all, from under her steep black brows, with a cunning smile upon her lips, and a cunning plot within her heart. At last she spoke ; " I know this giant. I heard of him in the East. Hephaistos the Fire King made him, in his forge in *Ætna* beneath the earth, and called him Talos, and gave him to Minos for a servant, to guard the coast to Crete. Thrice a day he walks round the island, and never stops to sleep ; and if strangers land he leaps into his furnace, which flames there among the hills ; and when he is red-hot he rushes on them, and burns them in his brazen hands."

Then all the heroes cried, " What shall we do, wise Medeia ? We must have water, or we die of thirst. Flesh and blood we can face fairly ; but who can face this red-hot brass ? "

" I can face red-hot brass, if the tale I hear be true. For they say that he has but one vein in all his body,

filled with liquid fire ; and that this vein is closed with a nail ; but I know not where that nail is placed. But if I can get it once into these hands, you shall water your ship here in peace.

Then she bade them put her on shore, and row off again, and wait what would befall.

And the heroes obeyed her unwillingly ; for they were ashamed to leave her so alone ; but Jason said, “She is dearer to me than to any of you, yet I will trust her freely on shore ; she has more plots than we can dream of, in the windings of that fair and cunning head.”

So they left the witch-maiden on the shore ; and she stood there in her beauty all alone, till the giant strode back red-hot from head to heel, while the grass hissed and smoked beneath his tread.

And when he saw the maiden alone, he stopped ; and she looked boldly up into his face without moving, and began her magic song :—

“Life is short, though life is sweet ; and even men of brass and fire must die. The brass must rust, the fire must cool, for time gnaws all things in their turn. Life is short, though life is sweet ; but sweeter to live forever ; sweeter to live ever youthful like the Gods, who have ichor in their veins ; ichor which gives life, and youth, and joy, and a bounding heart.”

Then Talus said, “Who are you, strange maiden ; and where is this ichor of youth ?”

Then Medeia held up a flask of crystal, and said, “Here is the ichor of youth. I am Medeia the enchantress ; my sister Circe gave me this, and said, ‘Go and reward Talos the faithful servant, for his fame is gone out into all lands.’ So come, and I will pour this into your veins, that you may live forever young.”

And he listened to her false words, that simple Talos, and came near ; and Medeia said, “Dip yourself in the

sea first, and cool yourself, lest you burn my tender hands ; then show me where the nail in your vein is, that I may pour the ichor in."

Then that simple Talos dipped himself in the sea, till it hissed, and roared, and smoked ; and came and knelt before Medeia, and showed her the secret nail.

And she drew the nail out gently ; but she poured no ichor in ; and instead the liquid fire spouted forth, like a stream of red-hot iron. And Talus tried to leap up, crying, " You have betrayed me, false witch-maiden ! " But she lifted up her hands before him, and sang, till he sank beneath her spell. And as he sank, his brazen limbs clanked heavily, and the earth groaned beneath his weight ; and the liquid fire ran from his heel, like a stream of lava to the sea ; and Medeia laughed, and called to the heroes, " Come ashore, and water your ship in peace."

So they came, and found the giant lying dead ; and they fell down, and kissed Medeia's feet ; and watered their ship, and took sheep and oxen, and so left that inhospitable shore.

At last, after many more adventures, they came to the Cape of Malea, at the southwest point of the Peloponnese. And there they offered sacrifices, and Orpheus purged them from their guilt. Then they rowed away again to the northward, past the Laconian shore, and came all worn and tired by Sunium, and up the long Eubœan Strait, until they saw once more Pelion, and Aphetai, and Iolcos by the sea.

And they ran the ship ashore ; but they had no strength left to haul her up the beach ; and they crawled out on the pebbles, and sat down, and wept till they could weep no more. For the houses and the trees were all altered ; and all the faces which they saw were strange ; and their joy was swallowed up in sorrow, while they thought of

their youth, and all their labor, and the gallant comrades they had lost.

And the people crowded round, and asked them, "Who are you, that you sit weeping here?"

"We are the sons of your princes, who sailed out many a year ago. We went to fetch the golden fleece ; and we have brought it, and grief therewith. Give us news of our fathers and our mothers, if any of them be left alive on earth."

Then there was shouting and laughing, and weeping ; and all the kings came to the shore, and they led away the heroes to their homes, and bewailed the valiant dead.

Then Jason went up with Medeia to the palace of his uncle Pelias. And when he came in, Pelias sat by the hearth, crippled and blind with age ; while opposite him sat Æson, Jason's father, crippled and blind likewise ; and the two old men's heads shook together, as they tried to warm themselves before the fire.

And Jason fell down at his father's knees, and wept, and called him by his name. And the old man stretched his hands out, and felt him, and said, "Do not mock me, young hero. My son Jason is dead long ago at sea."

"I am your own son Jason, whom you trusted to the Centaur upon Pelion ; and I have brought home the golden fleece, and a princess of the Sun's race for my bride. So now give me up the kingdom, Pelias my uncle, and fulfil your promise as I have fulfilled mine."

Then his father clung to him like a child, and wept, and would not let him go ; and cried, "No. I shall not go down lonely to my grave. Promise me never to leave me till I die."

PART VI.

WHAT WAS THE END OF THE HEROES.

AND now I wish that I could end my story pleasantly ; but it is no fault of mine that I cannot. The old songs end it sadly, and I believe that they are right and wise ; for though the heroes were purified at Malea, yet sacrifices cannot make bad hearts good, and Jason had taken a wicked wife, and he had to bear his burden to the last.

And first she laid a cunning plot, to punish that poor old Pelias, instead of letting him die in peace.

For she told his daughters, "I can make old things young again ; I will show you how easy it is to do." So she took an old ram and killed him, and put him in a cauldron with magic herbs ; and whispered her spells over him, and he leapt out again a young lamb. So that "Medeia's cauldron" is a proverb still, by which we mean times of war and change, when the world has become old and feeble, and grows young again through bitter pains.

Then she said to Pelias's daughters, "Do to your father as I did to this ram, and he will grow young and strong again." But she only told them half the spell ; so they failed, while Media mocked them ; and poor old Pelias died, and his daughters came to misery. But the songs say she cured Æson, Jason's father, and he became young and strong again.

But Jason could not love her, after all her cruel deeds. So he was ungrateful to her, and wronged her : and she

revenged herself on him. And a terrible revenge she took—too terrible to speak of here. But you will hear of it yourselves when you grow up, for it has been sung in noble poetry and music ; and whether it be true or not, it stands forever as a warning to us, not to seek for help from evil persons, or to gain good ends by evil means. For if we use an adder even against our enemies, it will turn again and sting us.

But of all the other heroes there is many a brave tale left, which I have no space to tell you, so you must read them for yourselves ;—of the hunting of the boar in Calydon, which Meleager killed ; and of Heracles's twelve famous labors ; and of the seven who fought at Thebes ; and of the noble love of Castor and Polydeuces, the twin Dioscuroi ; how when one died, the other would not live without him, so they shared their immortality between them ; and Zeus changed them into the two twin stars, which never rise both at once.

And what became of Cheiron, the good immortal beast ? That too is a sad story ; for the heroes never saw him more. He was wounded by a poisoned arrow, at Pholoe among the hills, when Heracles opened the fatal wine-jar, which Cheiron had warned him not to touch. And the Centaurs smelt the wine, and flocked to it, and fought for it with Heracles : but he killed them all with his poisoned arrows, and Cheiron was left alone. Then Cheiron took up one of the arrows, and dropped it by chance upon his foot ; and the poison ran like fire along his veins, and he lay down, and longed to die ; and cried, "Through wine I perish, the bane of all my race. Why should I live forever in this agony ? Who will take my immortality that I may die ?"

Then Prometheus answered, the good Titan, whom Heracles had set free from Caucasus, "I will take your immortality and live forever, that I may help poor mortal

men." So Cheiron gave him his immortality, and died, and had rest from pain. And Heracles and Prometheus wept over him and went to bury him on Pelion : but Zeus took him up among the stars, to live forever, grand and mild, low down in the far southern sky.

And in time the heroes died, all but Nestor the silver-tongued old man ; and left behind them valiant sons, but not so great as they had been. Yet their fame, too, lives, till this day ; for they fought at the ten years' seige of Troy ; and their story is in the book which we call Homer, in two of the noblest songs on earth ; the Iliad, which tells us of the siege of Troy, and Achilles's quarrel with the kings : and the Odyssey, which tells the wanderings of Odysseus, through many lands for many years ; and how Alcinous sent him home at last, safe to Ithaca his beloved island, and to Penelope his faithful wife, and Telemachus his son, and Euphorbus the noble swineherd, and the old dog who licked his hand and died. We will read that sweet story, children, by the fire some winter night. And now I will end my tale, and begin another and a more cheerful one, of a hero who became a worthy king, and won his people's love.

STORY III.—THESEUS.

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PART I.

HOW THESEUS LIFTED THE STONE.

ONCE upon a time there was a princess in Trœzene, Aithra, the daughter of Pittheus the king. She had one fair son, named Theseus, the bravest lad in all the land ; and Aithra never smiled but when she looked at him, for her husband had forgotten her, and lived far away. And she used to go up to the mountain above Trœzene, to the temple of Poseidon, and sit there all day looking out across the bay, over Methana, to the purple peaks of Ægina, and the Attic shore beyond. And when Theseus was full fifteen years old, she took him up with her to the temple, and into the thickets of the grove which grew in the temple-yard. And she led him to a tall plane-tree, beneath whose shade grew arbutus, and lentisk, and purple heather-bushes. And there she sighed, and said, "Theseus, my son, go into that thicket, and you will find at the plane-tree foot a great flat stone ; lift it, and bring me what lies underneath."

Then Theseus pushed his way in through the thick bushes, and saw that they had not been moved for many a year. And searching among their roots he found a great flat stone, all overgrown with ivy, and acanthus, and moss. He tried to lift it, but he could not. And he

tried till the sweat ran down his brow from heat, and the tears from his eyes for shame: but all was of no avail. And at last he came back to his mother, and said, "I have found the stone, but I cannot lift it; nor do I think that any man could in all Trœzene."

Then she sighed, and said, "The Gods wait long; but they are just at last. Let it be for another year. The day may come when you will be a stronger man than lives in all Trœzene."

Then she took him by the hand, and went into the temple and prayed, and came down again with Theseus to her home.

And when a full year was past, she led Theseus up again to the temple, and bade him lift the stone: but he could not.

Then she sighed, and said the same words again, and went down, and came again the next year; but Theseus could not lift the stone then, nor the year after; and he longed to ask his mother the meaning of that stone, and what might lie underneath it; but her face was so sad, that he had not the heart to ask.

So he said to himself, "The day shall surely come when I will lift that stone, though no man in Trœzene can." And in order to grow strong he spent all his days in wrestling, and boxing, and hurling, and taming horses, and hunting the boar and the bull, and coursing goats and deer among the rocks; till upon all the mountains there was no hunter so swift as Theseus, and he killed Phaia, the wild sow of Crommuon, which wasted all the land; till all the people said, "Surely the Gods are with the lad."

And when his eighteenth year was past, Aithra led him up again to the temple, and said, "Theseus, lift the stone this day, or never know who you are." And Theseus went into the thicket, and stood over the stone,

and tugged at it ; and it moved. Then his spirit swelled within him, and he said, "If I break my heart in my body, it shall up." And he tugged at it once more, and lifted it, and rolled it over with a shout.

And when he looked beneath it, on the ground lay a sword of bronze, with a hilt of glittering gold, and by it a pair of golden sandals ; and he caught them up, and burst through the bushes like a wild boar, and leapt to his mother, holding them high above his head.

But when she saw them she wept long in silence, hiding her fair face in her shawl ; and Theseus stood by her wondering, and wept also, he knew not why. And when she was tired of weeping, she lifted up her head, and laid her finger on her lips, and said, "Hide them in your bosom, Theseus my son, and come with me where we can look down upon the sea."

Then they went outside the sacred wall, and looked down over the bright blue sea ; and Aithra said,—

"Do you see this land at our feet?"

And he said, "Yes, this is Trœzene, where I was born and bred."

And she said, "It is but a little land, barren and rocky, and looks towards the bleak northeast. Do you see that land beyond?"

"Yes, that is Attica, where the Athenian people dwell."

"That is a fair land and large, Theseus, my son ; and it looks toward the sunny south ; a land of olive-oil and honey, the joy of Gods and men. For the Gods have girdled it with mountains, whose veins are of pure silver, and their bones of marble white as snow ; and there the hills are sweet with thyme and basil, and the meadows with violet and asphodel, and the nightingales sing all day in the thickets, by the side of ever-flowing streams. There are twelve towns well peopled, the homes of an ancient race, the children of Kekrops the serpent-king,

the son of Mother Earth, who wear gold cicalas among the tresses of their golden hair ; for like the cicalas they sprang from the earth, and like the cicalas they sing all day, rejoicing in the genial sun. What would you do, son Theseus, if you were king of such a land ? ”

Then Theseus stood astonished, as he looked across the broad bright sea, and saw the fair Attic shore, from Sunium to Hymettus and Pentelicus, and all the mountain peaks which girdle Athens round. But Athens itself he could not see, for purple Ægina stood before it, midway across the sea.

Then his heart grew great within him and he said, “ If I were king of such a land I would rule it wisely and well in wisdom and in might, that when I died all men might weep over my tomb, and cry, ‘ Alas for the shepherd of his people ! ’ ”

And Aithra smiled, and said, “ Take, then, the sword and the sandals, and go to Ægeus, king of Athens, who lives on Pallas’s hill ; and say to him, ‘ The stone is lifted, but whose is the pledge beneath it ? ’ Then show him the sword and the sandals, and take what the Gods shall send.”

But Theseus wept—“ Shall I leave you, O my mother ? ”

But she answered, “ Weep not for me. That which is fated must be ; and grief is easy to those who do naught but grieve. Full of sorrow was my youth, and full of sorrow my womanhood. Full of sorrow was my youth for Bellerophon the slayer of the Chimæra, whom my father drove away by treason ; and full of sorrow my womanhood, for thy treacherous father and for thee ; and full of sorrow my old age will be (for I see my fate in dreams,) when the sons of the Swan shall carry me captive to the hollow vale of Eurotas, till I sail across the seas a slave, the handmaid of the pest of Greece. Yet shall I be avenged, when the golden-haired heroes sail

against Troy, and sack the palaces of Ilium; then my son shall set me free from thralldom, and I shall hear the tale of Theseus's fame. Yet beyond that I see new sorrows; but I can bear them as I have borne the past."

Then she kissed Theseus, and wept over him; and went into the temple, and Theseus saw her no more.

PART II.

HOW THESEUS SLEW THE DEVOURERS OF MEN.

So Theseus stood there alone, with his mind full of many hopes. And first, he thought of going down to the harbor and hiring a swift ship, and sailing across the bay to Athens; but even that seemed too slow for him, and he longed for wings to fly across the sea, and find his father. But after a while his heart began to fail him; and he sighed, and said within himself—

“What if my father have other sons about him, whom he loves? What if he will not receive me? And what have I done that he should receive me? He has forgotten me ever since I was born: why should he welcome me now?”

Then he thought a long while sadly; and at the last he cried aloud, “Yes! I will make him love me; for I will prove myself worthy of his love. I will win honor and renown, and do such deeds that Ægeus shall be proud of me, though he had fifty other sons! Did not Heracles win himself honor though he was opprest, and the slave of Eurystheus? Did he not kill all robbers and evil beasts, and drain great lakes and marshes, breaking the hills through with his club? Therefore it was that all men honored him, because he rid them of their miseries, and made life pleasant to them, and their children after them. Where can I go, to do as Heracles has done? Where can I find strange adventures, robbers, and monsters, and the children of hell, the enemies of men? I will go by land, and into the mountains, and round by

the way of the Isthmus. Perhaps there I may hear of brave adventures, and do something which shall win my father's love."

So he went by land, and away into the mountains, with his father's sword upon his thigh, till he came to the Spider mountains, which hang over Epidaurus and the sea, where the glens run downward from one peak in the midst, as the rays spread in a spider's web.

And he went up into the gloomy glens, between the furrowed marble walls, till the lowland grew blue beneath his feet, and the clouds drove damp about his head.

But he went up and up forever, through the spider's web of glens, till he could see the narrow gulfs spread below him, north and south, and east and west ; black cracks half-choked with mists, and above all a dreary down.

But over that down he must go, for there was no road right or left ; so he toiled on through bog and brake, till he came to a pile of stones.

And on the stones a man was sitting, wrapt in a bear-skin cloak. The head of the bear served him for a cap, and its teeth grinned white around his brows ; and the feet were tied about his throat, and their claws shone white upon his chest. And when he saw Theseus he rose, and laughed till the glens rattled.

"And who art thou, fair fly, who hast walked into the spider's web?" But Theseus walked on steadily, and made no answer : but he thought, "Is this some robber? and has an adventure come already to me?" But the strange man laughed louder than ever, and said,—

"Bold fly, know you not that these glens are the web from which no fly ever finds his way out again, and this down the spider's house, and I the spider who suck the flies? Come hither, and let me feast upon you ; for it is

of no use to run away ; so cunning a web has my father Hephaistos spread for me, when he made these clefts in the mountains, through which no man finds his way home."

But Theseus came on steadily, and asked,—

"And what is your name among men, bold spider? and where are your spider's fangs?"

Then the strange man laughed again,—

"My name is Periphetes, the son of Hephaistos and Anticleia the mountain nymph. But men call me Corynetes the club-bearer; and here is my spider's fang."

And he lifted from off the stones at his side a mighty club of bronze.

"This my father gave me, and forged it himself in the roots of the mountain; and with it I pound all proud flies till they give out their fatness and their sweetness. So give me up that gay sword of yours, and your mantle, and your golden sandals, lest I pound you, and by ill luck you die."

But Theseus wrapt his mantle round his left arm quickly, in hard folds, from his shoulder to his hand, and drew his sword, and rushed upon the club-bearer, and the club-bearer rushed on him.

Thrice he struck at Theseus, and made him bend under the blows like a sapling; but Theseus guarded his head with his left arm, and the mantle which was wrapped around it.

And thrice Theseus sprang upright after the blow, like a sapling when the storm is past; and he stabbed at the club-bearer with his sword, but the loose folds of the bearskin saved him.

Then Theseus grew mad, and closed with him, and caught him by the throat, and they fell and rolled over together: but when Theseus rose up from the ground, the club-bearer lay still at his feet.

Then Theseus took his club and his bear-skin, and left him to the kites and crows, and went upon his journey down the glens on the further slope, till he came to a broad green valley, and saw flocks and herds sleeping beneath the trees.

And by the side of a pleasant fountain, under the shade of rocks and trees, were nymphs and shepherds dancing ; but no one piped to them while they danced.

And when they saw Theseus they shrieked ; and the shepherds ran off, and drove away their flocks ; while the nymphs dived into the fountain like coots, and vanished.

Theseus wondered and laughed : “ What strange fancies have folks here who run away from strangers, and have no music when they dance ! ” But he was tired, and dusty, and thirsty ; so he thought no more of them, but drank and bathed in the clear pool, and then lay down in the shade under a plane-tree, while the water sang him to sleep, as it tinkled down from stone to stone.

And when he woke he heard a whispering, and saw the nymphs peeping at him across the fountain from the dark mouth of a cave, where they sat on green cushions of moss. And one said, “ Surely he is not Periphetes ; ” and another, “ He looks like no robber, but a fair and gentle youth. ”

Then Theseus smiled, and called them, “ Fair nymphs, I am not Periphetes. He sleeps among the kites and crows : but I have brought away his bear-skin and his club. ”

Then they leapt across the pool, and came to him, and called the shepherds back. And he told them how he had slain the club-bearer : and the shepherds kissed his feet, and sang, “ Now we shall feed our flocks in peace, and not be afraid to have music when we dance ; for the cruel club-bearer has met his match, and he will listen for our pipes no more. ”

Then they brought him kid's flesh and wine, and the nymphs brought him honey from the rocks ; and he ate, and drank, and slept again, while the nymphs and shepherds danced and sang. And when he woke, they begged him to stay ; but he would not. "I have a great work to do," he said ; "I must be away toward the Isthmus, that I may go to Athens."

But the shepherds said, "Will you go alone toward Athens? None travel that way now, except in armed troops."

"As for arms, I have enough, as you see. And as for troops, an honest man is good enough company for himself. Why should I not go alone toward Athens?"

"If you do, you must look warily about you on the Isthmus, lest you meet Sinis the robber, whom men call Pituocampes the pine-bender ; for he bends down two pine-trees, and binds all travellers hand and foot between them ; and when he lets the trees go again, their bodies are torn in sunder."

"And after that," said another, "you must go inland, and not dare to pass over the cliffs of Sciron ; for on the left hand are the mountains, and on the right the sea, so that you have no escape, but must needs meet Sciron the robber, who will make you wash his feet ; and while you are washing them he will kick you over the cliff, to the tortoise who lives below, and feeds upon the bodies of the dead."

And before Theseus could answer, another cried, "And after that is a worse danger still, unless you go inland always, and leave Eleusis far on your right. For in Eleusis rules Kerkuon the cruel king, the terror of all mortals, who killed his own daughter Alope in prison. But she was changed into a fair fountain ; and her child he cast out upon the mountains ; but the wild mares gave it milk. And now he challenges all comers to wrestle with him ;

for he is the best wrestler in all Attica, and overthrows all who come : and those whom he overthrows he murders miserably, and his palace-court is full of their bones."

Then Theseus frowned, and said, "This seems indeed an ill-ruled land, and adventures enough in it to be tried. But if I am the heir of it, I will rule it and right it, and here is my royal sceptre." And he shook his club of bronze, while the nymphs and shepherds clung round him, and entreated him not to go.

But on he went, nevertheless, till he could see both the seas, and the citadel of Corinth towering high above all the land. And he past swiftly along the Isthmus, for his heart burned to meet that cruel Sinis ; and in a pine-wood at last he met him, where the Isthmus was narrowest and the road ran between high rocks. There he sat upon a stone by the wayside, with a young fir-tree for a club across his knees, and a cord laid ready by his side ; and over his head, upon the fir-tops, hung the bones of murdered men.

Then Theseus shouted to him, "Holla, thou valiant pine-bender, hast thou two fir-trees left for me?"

And Sinis leapt to his feet, and answered, pointing to the bones above his head, "My larder has grown empty lately, so I have two fir-trees ready for thee." And he rushed on Theseus, lifting his club, and Theseus rushed upon him.

Then they hammered together till the greenwoods rang : but the metal was tougher than the pine ; and Sinis's club broke right across, as the bronze came down upon it. Then Theseus heaved up another mighty stroke, and smote Sinis down upon his face ; and knelt upon his back, and bound him with his own cord, and said, "As thou hast done to others, so shall it be done to thee." Then he bent down two young fir-trees, and bound Sinis between

them, for all his struggling and his prayers ; and let them go, and ended Sinis, and went on, leaving him to the hawks and crows.

Then he went over the hills toward Megara, keeping close along the Saronic Sea, till he came to the cliffs of Sciron, and the narrow path between the mountain and the sea.

And there he saw Sciron sitting by a fountain, at the edge of the cliff. On his knees was a mighty club ; and he had barred the path with stones, so that every one must stop who came up.

Then Theseus shouted to him, and said, “Holla, thou tortoise-feeder, do thy feet need washing to-day ?”

And Sciron leapt to his feet and answered—

“My tortoise is empty and hungry, and my feet need washing to-day.” And he stood before his barrier, and lifted up his club in both hands.

Then Theseus rushed upon him ; and sore was the battle upon the cliff ; for when Sciron felt the weight of the bronze club, he dropped his own, and closed with Theseus, and tried to hurl him by main force over the cliff. But Theseus was a wary wrestler, and dropt his own club, and caught him by the throat and by the knee, and forced him back against the wall of stones, and crushed him up against them, till his breath was almost gone. And Sciron cried panting, “Loose me, and I will let thee pass.” But Theseus answered, “I must not pass till I have made the rough way smooth ;” and he forced him back against the wall till it fell, and Sciron rolled head over heels.

Then Theseus lifted him up all bruised, and said, “Come hither and wash my feet.” And he drew his sword, and sat down by the well, and said, “Wash my feet, or I cut you piecemeal.”

And Sciron washed his feet trembling ; and when it was done, Theseus rose and cried, “As thou hast done

to others, so shall it be done to thee. Go feed thy tortoise thyself;" and he kicked him over the cliff into the sea.

And whether the tortoise ate him, I know not; for some say that earth and sea both disdained to take his body, so foul it was with sin. So the sea cast it out upon the shore, and the shore cast it back into the sea, and at last the waves hurled it high into the air in anger; and it hung there long without a grave, till it was changed into a desolate rock, which stands there in the surge until this day.

This at least is true, which Pausanias tells, that in the royal porch at Athens he saw the figure of Theseus modelled in clay, and by him Sciron the robber, falling headlong into the sea.

Then he went a long day's journey, past Megara, into the Attic land, and high before him rose the snow-peaks of Cithæron, all cold above the black pine-woods, where haunt the Furies, and the raving Bacchæ, and the nymphs who drive men wild, far aloft upon the dreary mountains, where the storms howl all day long. And on his right hand was the sea always, and Salamis, with its island cliffs, and the sacred strait of the sea-fight, where afterwards the Persians fled before the Greeks. So he went all day until the evening, till he saw the Thriasian plain, and the sacred city of Eleusis, where the Earth-mother's Temple stands. For there she met Triptolemus, when all the land lay waste, Demeter the kind Earth-mother, and in her hands a sheaf of corn. And she taught him to plough the fallows, and to yoke the lazy kine; and she taught him to sow the seed-fields, and to reap the golden grain; and sent him forth to teach all nations, and give corn to laboring men. So at Eleusis all men honor her, whosoever tills the land; her and Triptolemus her beloved, who gave corn to laboring men.

And he went along the plain into Eleusis, and stood in the market-place, and cried, —

“Where is Kerkuon the king of the city? I must wrestle a fall with him to-day.”

Then all the people crowded round him, and cried, “Fair youth, why will you die? Hasten out of the city, before the cruel king hears that a stranger is here.”

But Theseus went up through the town, while the people wept and prayed, and through the gates of the palace yard, and through the piles of bones and skulls, till he came to the door of Kerkuon’s hall, the terror of all mortal men.

And there he saw Kerkuon sitting at the table in the hall alone; and before him was a whole sheep roasted, and beside him a whole jar of wine. And Theseus stood and called him, “Holla, thou valiant wrestler, wilt thou wrestle a fall to-day?”

And Kerkuon looked up and laughed, and answered, “I will wrestle a fall to-day; but come in, for I am lonely and thou weary, and eat and drink before thou die.”

Then Theseus went up boldly, and sat down before Kerkuon at the board; and he ate his fill of the sheep’s flesh, and drank his fill of the wine; and Theseus ate enough for three men, but Kerkuon ate enough for seven.

But neither spoke a word to the other, though they looked across the table by stealth; and each said in his heart, “He has broad shoulders; but I trust mine are as broad as his.”

At last, when the sheep was eaten, and the jar of wine drained dry, King Kerkuon rose, and cried, “Let us wrestle a fall before we sleep.”

So they tossed off all their garments, and went forth into the palace-yard; and Kerkuon bade strew fresh sand in an open space between the bones. And there the

heroes stood face to face, while their eyes glared like wild bulls' ; and all the people crowded at the gates, to see what would befall.

And there they stood and wrestled, till the stars shone out above their heads ; up and down and round, till the sand was stamped hard beneath their feet. And their eyes flashed like stars in the darkness, and their breath went up like smoke in the night air ; but neither took nor gave a footstep, and the people watched silent at the gates.

But at last Kerkuon grew angry, and caught Theseus round the neck, and shook him as a mastiff shakes a rat ; but he could not shake him off his feet.

But Theseus was quick and wary, and clasped Kerkuon round the waist, and slipped his loin quickly underneath him, while he caught him by the wrist ; and then he hove a mighty heave, a heave which would have stirred an oak, and lifted Kerkuon, and pitched him, right over his shoulder on the ground.

Then he leapt on him and called, "Yield, or I kill thee !" but Kerkuon said no word ; for his heart was burst within him, with the fall, and the meat, and the wine.

Then Theseus opened the gates, and called in all the people ; and they cried, "You have slain our evil king ; be you now our king, and rule us well."

"I will be your king in Eleusis, and I will rule you right and well : for this cause I have slain all evil-doers, Sinis, and Sciron, and this man last of all."

Then an aged man stepped forth, and said, "Young hero, hast thou slain Sinis ? Beware then of Ægeus, king of Athens, to whom thou goest, for he is near of kin to Sinis."

"Then I have slain my own kinsman," said Theseus, "though well he deserved to die. Who will purge me

from his death, for rightfully I slew him, unrighteous and accursed as he was ? ”

And the old man answered,—

“That will the heroes do, the sons of Phytalus, who dwell beneath the elm-tree in Aphidnai, by the bank of silver Cephisus ; for they know the mysteries of the Gods. Thither you shall go and be purified, and after you shall be our king.”

So he took an oath of the people of Eleusis, that they would serve him as their king, and went away next morning across the Thriasian plain, and over the hills toward Aphidnai, that he might find the sons of Phytalus.

And as he was skirting the Vale of Cephisus, along the foot of lofty Parnes, a very tall and strong man came down to meet him, dressed in rich garments. On his arms were golden bracelets, and round his neck a collar of jewels ; and he came forward, bowing courteously, and held out both his hands, and spoke,—

“Welcome, fair youth, to these mountains ; happy am I to have met you ! For what greater pleasure to a good man, than to entertain strangers ? But I see that you are weary. Come up to my castle, and rest yourself awhile.”

“I give you thanks,” said Theseus ; “but I am in haste to go up the valley, and to reach Aphidnai in the Vale of Cephisus.”

“Alas ! you have wandered far from the right way, and you cannot reach Aphidnai to-night ; for there are many miles of mountain between you and it, and steep passes, and cliffs dangerous after nightfall. It is well for you that I met you ; for my whole joy is to find strangers, and to feast them at my castle, and hear tales from them of foreign lands. Come up with me, and eat the best of venison, and drink the rich red wine ; and sleep upon my famous bed, of which all travellers say, that they never saw the like. For whatsoever the stature of my

guest, however tall or short, that bed fits him to a hair, and he sleeps on it as he never slept before." And he laid hold on Theseus's hands, and would not let him go.

Theseus wished to go forward : but he was ashamed to seem churlish to so hospitable a man ; and he was curious to see that wondrous bed ; and beside, he was hungry and weary : yet he shrank from the man, he knew not why : for though his voice was gentle and fawning, it was dry and husky like a toad's ; and though his eyes were gentle, they were dull and cold like stones. But he consented, and went with the man up a glen which led from the road toward the peaks of Parnes, under the dark shadow of the cliffs.

And as they went up, the glen grew narrower, and the cliffs higher and darker, and beneath them a torrent roared, half seen between bare limestone crags. And around them was neither tree nor bush, while from the white peaks of Parnes the snow-blasts swept down the glen, cutting and chilling, till a horror fell on Theseus, as he looked round at that doleful place. And he asked at last, "Your castle stands, it seems, in a dreary region."

"Yes, but once within it, hospitality makes all things cheerful. But who are these?" and he looked back, and Theseus also ; and far below, along the road which they had left, came a string of laden asses, and merchants walking by them, watching their ware.

"Ah, poor souls !" said the stranger. "Well for them that I looked back and saw them ! And well for me too, for I shall have the more guests at my feast. Wait awhile till I go down and call them, and we will eat and drink together the livelong night. Happy am I, to whom Heaven sends so many guests at once !"

And he ran back down the hill, waving his hand and shouting to the merchants, while Theseus went slowly up the steep pass.

But as he went up he met an aged man, who had been gathering drift-wood in the torrent-bed. He had laid down his fagot in the road, and was trying to lift it again to his shoulder. And when he saw Theseus, he called to him, and said,—

“O fair youth, help me up with my burden ; for my limbs are stiff and weak with years.”

Then Theseus lifted the burden on his back. And the old man blest him, and then looked earnestly upon him, and said,—

“Who are you, fair youth, and wherefore travel you this doleful road?”

“Who I am my parents know : but I travel this doleful road because I have been invited by a hospitable man, who promises to feast me, and to make me sleep upon I know not what wondrous bed.”

Then the old man clapped his hands together, and cried,—

“O house of Hades, man-devouring ; will thy maw never be full ? Know, fair youth, that you are going to torment and to death ; for he who met you (I will requite your kindness by another) is a robber and a murderer of men. Whatsoever stranger he meets he entices him hither to death ; and as for this bed of which he speaks, truly it fits all comers, yet none ever rose alive off it save me.”

“Why ?” asked Theseus, astonished.

“Because, if a man be too tall for it, he lops his limbs till they be short enough, and if he be too short, he stretches his limbs till they be long enough : but me only he spared, seven weary years ago ; for I alone of all fitted his bed exactly, so he spared me, and made me his slave. And once I was a wealthy merchant, and dwelt in brazen-gated Thebes ; but now I hew wood and draw water for him, the torment of all mortal men.”

Then Theseus said nothing ; but he ground his teeth together.

“Escape then,” said the old man, “for he will have no pity on thy youth. But yesterday he brought up hither a young man and a maiden, and fitted them upon his bed : and the young man’s hands and feet he cut off ; but the maiden’s limbs he stretched until she died, and so both perished miserably—but I am tired of weeping over the slain. And therefore he is called Procrustes the stretcher, though his father called him Damastes. Flee from him : yet whither will you flee ? The cliffs are steep, and who can climb them ? and there is no other road.”

But Theseus laid his hand upon the old man’s mouth, and said, “There is no need to flee ;” and he turned to go down the pass.

“Do not tell him that I have warned you, or he will kill me by some evil death ;” and the old man screamed after him down the glen : but Theseus strode on in his wrath.

And he said to himself, “This is an ill-ruled land ; when shall I have done ridding it of monsters ?” And as he spoke, Procrustes came up the hill, and all the merchants with him, smiling and talking gayly. And when he saw Theseus, he cried, “Ah, fair young guest, have I kept you too long waiting ?”

But Theseus answered, “The man who stretches his guests upon a bed, and hews off their hands and feet, what shall be done to him, when right is done throughout the land ?”

Then Procrustes’s countenance changed, and his cheeks grew as green as a lizard, and he felt for his sword in haste ; but Theseus leapt on him, and cried,—

“Is this true, my host, or is it false ?” and he clasped Procrustes’s round waist and elbow, so that he could not draw his sword.

“Is this true, my host, or is it false?” But Procrustes answered never a word.

Then Theseus flung him from him, and lifted up his dreadful club ; and before Procrustes could strike him he had struck, and felled him to the ground.

And once again he struck him ; and his evil soul fled forth, and went down to Hades squeaking, like a bat into the darkness of a cave.

Then Theseus stript him of his gold ornaments, and went up to his house, and found there great wealth and treasure, which he had stolen from the passers by. And he called the people of the country, whom Procrustes had spoiled a long time, and parted the spoil among them, and went down the mountains, and away.

And he went down the glens of Parnes, through mist, and cloud, and rain, down the slopes of oak, and lentisk, and arbutus, and fragrant bay, till he came to the Vale of Cephissus, and the pleasant town of Aphidnai, and the home of the Phytalid heroes, where they dwelt beneath a mighty elm.

And there they built an altar, and bade him bathe in Cephissus, and offer a yearling ram, and purified him from the blood of Sinis, and sent him away in peace.

And he went down the valley by Archarnai, and by the silver-swirling stream, while all the people blessed him ; for the fame of his prowess had spread wide, till he saw the plain of Athens, and the hill where Athené dwells.

So Theseus went up through Athens, and all the people ran out to see him ; for his fame had gone before him, and every one knew of his mighty deeds. And all cried, “Here comes the hero, who slew Sinis, and Phaia the wild sow of Crommyon, and conquered Cercyon in wrestling, and slew Procrustes the pitiless.” But Theseus went on sadly and steadfastly ; for his heart yearned after his

father ; and he said, " How shall I deliver him from these leeches who suck his blood ? "

So he went up the holy stairs, and into the Acropolis, where Ægeus's palace stood ; and he went straight into Ægeus's hall, and stood upon the threshold, and looked round.

And there he saw his cousins sitting about the table, at the wine ; many a son of Pallas, but no Ægeus among them. There they sat and feasted, and laughed, and passed the wine-cup round ; while harpers harped, and slave girls sang, and the tumblers showed their tricks.

Loud laughed the sons of Pallas, and fast went the wine-cup round ; but Theseus frowned, and said under his breath, " No wonder that the land is full of robbers, while such as these bear rule. "

Then the Pallantids saw him, and called to him, half-drunk with wine—" Holla, tall stranger at the door, what is your will to-day ? "

" I come hither to ask for hospitality. "

" Then take it, and welcome. You look like a hero and a bold warrior ; and we like such to drink with us. "

" I ask no hospitality of you ; I ask it of Ægeus the king, the master of this house. "

At that some growled, and some laughed, and shouted, " Heyday, we are all masters here. "

" Then I am master as much as the rest of you, " said Theseus ; and he strode past the table up the hall, and looked around for Ægeus ; but he was nowhere to be seen.

The Pallantids looked at him, and then at each other ; and each whispered to the man next him, " This is a forward fellow ; he ought to be thrust out at the door. " But each man's neighbor whispered in return, " His shoulders are broad ; will you rise and put him out ? " So they all sat still where they were.

Then Theseus called to the servants, and said, "Go tell King Ægeus your master, that Theseus of Trœzene is here, and asks to be his guest awhile."

A servant ran and told Ægeus, where he sat in his chamber within, by Medeia the dark witch-woman, watching her eye and hand. And when Ægeus heard of Trœzene, he turned pale and red again; and rose from his seat trembling, while Medeia watched him like a snake.

"What is Trœzene to you?" she asked. But he said hastily, "Do you not know who this Theseus is? The hero who has cleared the country from all monsters; but that he came from Trœzene, I never heard before. I must go out and welcome him."

So Ægeus came out into the hall; and when Theseus saw him, his heart leapt into his mouth, and he longed to fall on his neck and welcome him; but he controlled himself, and said, "My father may not wish for me, after all. I will try him before I discover myself;" and he bowed low before Ægeus, and said, "I have delivered the king's realm from many monsters; therefore I am come to ask a reward of the king."

And old Ægeus looked on him, and loved him, as what fond heart would not have done? But he only sighed, and said,—

"It is little that I can give you, noble lad, and nothing that is worthy of you; for surely you are no mortal man, or at least no mortal's son."

"All I ask," said Theseus, "is to eat and drink at your table."

"That I can give you," said Ægeus, "if at least I am master in my own hall."

Then he bade them put a seat for Theseus, and set before him the best of the feast; and Theseus sat and ate so much, that all the company wondered at him; but always he kept his club by his side.

But Medeia the dark witch-woman had been watching him all the while. She saw how Ægeus turned red and pale, when the lad said that he came from Trœzene. She saw, too, how his heart was opened toward Theseus; and how Theseus bore himself before all the sons of Pallas, like a lion among a pack of curs. And she said to herself, "This youth will be master here; perhaps he is nearer to Ægeus already than mere fancy. At least the Pallantids will have no chance, by the side of such as he."

Then she went back into her chamber modestly, while Theseus ate and drank; and all the servants whispered, "This, then, is the man who killed the monsters! How noble are his looks, and how huge his size! Ah, would that he were our master's son!"

But presently Medeia came forth, decked in all her jewels, and her rich Eastern robes, and looking more beautiful than the day; so that all the guests could look at nothing else. And in her right hand she held a golden cup, and in her left a flask of gold; and she came up to Theseus, and spoke, in a sweet, soft winning voice.—

"Hail to the hero, the conqueror, the unconquered, the destroyer of all evil things! Drink, hero, of my charmed cup, which gives rest after every toil, which heals all wounds, and pours new life into the veins. Drink of my cup, for in it sparkles the wine of the East, and Nepenthe, the comfort of the Immortals."

And as she spoke, she poured the flask into the cup; and the fragrance of the wine spread through the hall, like the scent of thyme and roses.

And Theseus looked up in her fair face, and into her deep dark eyes. And as he looked, he shrank and shuddered; for they were dry like the eyes of a snake. And he rose, and said, "The wine is rich and fragrant, and the wine-bearer as fair as the Immortals; but let her

pledge me first herself in the cup, that the wine may be the sweeter from her lips."

Then Medeia turned pale, and stammered, "Forgive me, fair hero ; but I am ill, and dare drink no wine."

And Theseus looked again into her eyes, and cried, "Thou shalt pledge me in that cup or die." And he lifted up his brazen club, while all the guests looked on aghast.

Medeia shrieked a fearful shriek, and dashed the cup to the ground, and fled ; and where the wine flowed over the marble pavement, the stone bubbled, and crumbled, and hissed, under the fierce venom of the draught.

But Medeia called her dragon chariot, and sprang into it and fled aloft, away over land and sea, and no man saw her more.

And Ægeus cried, "What hast thou done?" But Theseus pointed to the stone—"I have rid the land of an enchantment : now I will rid it of one more."

And he came close to Ægeus, and drew from his bosom the sword and the sandals, and said the words which his mother bade him.

And Ægeus stepped back a pace, and looked at the lad till his eyes grew dim ; and then he cast himself on his neck and wept, and Theseus wept on his neck, till they had no strength left to weep more.

Then Ægeus turned to all the people, and cried, "Behold my son, children of Cecrops, a better man than his father was before him."

Who then were mad but the Pallantids, though they had been mad enough before? And one shouted, "Shall we make room for an upstart, a pretender, who comes from we know not where?" And another, "If he be one, we are more than one ; and the stronger can hold his own." And one shouted one thing and one another ; for they were hot and wild with wine : but all caught swords and

lances off the wall, where the weapons hung around, and sprang forward to Theseus, and Theseus sprang forward to them.

And he cried, "Go in peace, if you will, my cousins ; but if not, your blood be on your own heads." But they rushed at him ; and then stopped short and railed him, as curs stop and bark when they rouse a lion from his lair.

But one hurled a lance from the rear rank, which past close by Theseus's head ; and at that Theseus rushed forward, and the fight began indeed. Twenty against one they fought, and yet Theseus beat them all ; and those who were left fled down into the town, where the people set on them, and drove them out, till Theseus was left alone in the palace, with Ægeus his new-found father. But before nightfall all the town came up, with victims, and dances, and songs ; and they offered sacrifices to Athené, and rejoiced all the night long, because their king had found a noble son, and an heir to his royal house.

So Theseus stayed with his father all the winter ; and when the spring equinox drew near, all the Athenians grew sad and silent, and Theseus saw it, and asked the reason ; but no one would answer him a word.

Then he went to his father, and asked him : but Ægeus turned away his face and wept.

"Do not ask, my son, beforehand, about evils which must happen : it is enough to have to face them when they come."

And when the spring equinox came, a herald came to Athens, and stood in the market, and cried, "O people and King of Athens, where is your yearly tribute ?" Then a great lamentation arose throughout the city. But Theseus stood up to the herald, and cried,—

"And who are you, dog-faced, who dare demand tribute here ? If I did not reverence your herald's staff, I would brain you with this club."

And the herald answered proudly, for he was a grave and ancient man,—

“Fair youth, I am not dog-faced or shameless ; but I do my master’s bidding, Minos the King of hundred-citied Crete, the wisest of all kings on earth. And you must be surely a stranger here, or you would know why I come, and that I come by right.”

“I am a stranger here. Tell me, then, why you come.”

“To fetch the tribute which King Ægeus promised to Minos, and confirmed his promise with an oath. For Minos conquered all this land, and Megara which lies to the east, when he came hither with a great fleet of ships, enraged about the murder of his son. For his son Androgeos came hither to the Panathenaic games, and overcame all the Greeks in the sports, so that the people honored him as a hero. But when Ægeus saw his valor, he envied him, and feared lest he should join the sons of Pallas, and take away the sceptre from him. So he plotted against his life, and slew him basely, no man knows how or where. Some say that he waylaid him by Oinoë, on the road which goes to Thebes ; and some that he sent him against the bull of Marathon, that the beast might kill him. But Ægeus says that the young men killed him from envy, because he had conquered them in the games. So Minos came hither and avenged him, and would not depart till this land had promised him tribute, seven youths and seven maidens every year, who go with me in a black-sailed ship, till they come to hundred-citied Crete.”

And Theseus ground his teeth together, and said, “Wert thou not a herald I would kill thee, for saying such things of my father : but I will go to him, and know the truth.” So he went to his father, and asked him ; but he turned away his head and wept, and said, “Blood was

shed in the land unjustly, and by blood it is avenged. Break not my heart by questions ; it is enough to endure in silence."

Then Theseus groaned inwardly, and said, "I will go myself with these youths and maidens, and kill Minos upon his royal throne."

But Ægeus shrieked, and cried, "You shall not go, my son, the light of my old age, to whom alone I look to rule this people, after I am dead and gone. You shall not go, to die horribly, as those youths and maidens die,; for Minos thrusts them into a labyrinth, which Daidalos made for him among the rocks,—Daidalos the renegade, the accursed, the pest of this his native land. From that labyrinth no one can escape, entangled in its winding ways, before they meet the Minotaur the monster, who feeds upon the flesh of men. There he devours them horribly, and they never see this land again."

Then Theseus grew red, and his ears tingled, and his heart beat loud in his bosom. And he stood awhile like a tall stone pillar, on the cliffs above some hero's grave ; and at last he spoke,—

"Therefore all the more I will go with them, and slay the accursed beast. Have I not slain all evil-doers and monsters, that I might free this land? Where are Periphetes, and Sinis, and Kerkuon, and Phaia the wild sow? Where are the fifty sons of Pallas? And this Minotaur shall go the road which they have gone, and Minos himself, if he dare stay me."

"But how will you slay him, my son? For you must leave your club and your armor behind, and be cast to the monster, defenceless and naked like the rest."

And Theseus said, "Are there no stones in that labyrinth ; and have I not fists and teeth? Did I need my club to kill Kerkuon, the terror of all mortal men?"

Then Ægeus clung to his knees ; but he would not hear ;

and at last he let him go, weeping bitterly, and said only this one word, —

“Promise me but this, if you return in peace, though that may hardly be ; take down the black sail of the ship, (for I shall watch for it all day upon the cliffs,) and hoist instead a white sail, that I may know afar off that you are safe.”

And Theseus promised, and went out, and to the market-place where the herald stood, while they drew lots for the youths and maidens, who were to sail in that doleful crew. And the people stood wailing and weeping, as the lot fell on this one and on that : but Theseus strode into the midst, and cried, —

“Here is a youth who needs no lot. I myself will be one of the seven.”

And the herald asked in wonder, “Fair youth, know you whither you are going?”

And Theseus said, “I know. Let us go down to the black-sailed ship.”

So they went down to the black-sailed ship, seven maidens, and seven youths, and Theseus before them all, and the people following them lamenting. But Theseus whispered to his companions, “Have hope, for the monster is not immortal. Where are Periphetes, and Sinis, and Sciron, and all whom I have slain?” Then their hearts were comforted a little : but they wept as they went on board, and the cliffs of Sunium rang, and all the isles of the Ægean Sea, with the voice of their lamentation, as they sailed on toward their deaths in Crete.

PART III.

HOW THESEUS SLEW THE MINOTAUR.

AND at last they came to Crete, and to Cnossus, beneath the peaks of Ida, and to the palace of Minos the great king, to whom Zeus himself taught laws. So he was the wisest of all mortal kings, and conquered all the Ægean isles ; and his ships were as many as the sea-gulls, and his palace like a marble hill. And he sat among the pillars of the hall, upon his throne of beaten gold, and around him stood the speaking statues which Daidalos had made by his skill. For Daidalos was the most cunning of all Athenians, and he first invented the plumb-line, and the auger, and glue, and many a tool with which wood is wrought. And he first set up masts in ships, and yards, and his son made sails for them : but Perdix his nephew excelled him ; for he first invented the saw and its teeth, copying it from the backbone of a fish ; and invented, too, the chisel, and the compasses, and the potter's wheel which moulds the clay. Therefore Daidalos envied him, and hurled him headlong from the temple of Athené : but the Goddess pitied him, (for she loves the wise,) and changed him into a partridge, which flits forever about the hills. And Daidalos fled to Crete, to Minos, and worked for him many a year, till he did a shameful deed, at which the sun hid his face on high.

Then he fled from the anger of Minos, he and Icaros his son having made themselves wings of feathers, and fixed the feathers with wax. So they flew over the sea toward Sicily ; but Icaros flew too near the sun ; and the

wax of his wings was melted, and he fell into the Icarian Sea. But Daidalos came safe to Sicily, and there wrought many a wondrous work ; for he made for King Cocalos a reservoir, from which a great river watered all the land, and a castle and a treasury on a mountain, which the giants themselves could not have stormed ; and in Selinos he took the steam which comes up from the fires of Ætna, and made of it a warm bath of vapor, to cure the pains of mortal men ; and he made a honeycomb of gold, in which the bees came and stored their honey, and in Egypt he made the forecourt of the temple of Hephaistos in Memphis, and a statue of himself within it, and many another wondrous work. And for Minos he made statues which spoke and moved, and the temple of Britomartis, and the dancing-hall of Ariadne, which he carved of fair white stone. And in Sardinia he worked for Iolaos, and in many a land beside, wandering up and down forever with his cunning, unlovely and accursed by men.

But Theseus stood before Minos, and they looked each other in the face. And Minos bade take them to prison, and cast them to the monster one by one, that the death of Androgeos might be avenged. Then Theseus cried, —

“ A boon, O Minos. Let me be thrown first to the beast. For I came hither for that very purpose, of my own will, and not by lot.”

“ Who art thou, then, brave youth ? ”

“ I am the son of him whom of all men thou hatest most, Ægeus the king of Athens, and I am come here to end this matter.”

And Minos pondered awhile, looking steadfastly at him, and he thought, “ The lad means to atone by his own death for his father’s sin ; ” and he answered at last mildly, —

“ Go back in peace, my son. It is a pity that one so brave should die.”

But Theseus said, "I have sworn that I will not go back till I have seen the monster face to face."

And at that Minos frowned, and said, "Then thou shalt see him; take the madman away."

And they led Theseus away into the prison, with the other youths and maids.

But Ariadne, Minos's daughter, saw him, as she came out of her white stone hall; and she loved him for his courage and his majesty, and said, "Shame that such a youth should die!" And by night she went down to the prison, and told him all her heart; and said,—

"Flee down to your ship at once for I have bribed the guards before the door. Flee, you and all your friends, and go back in peace to Greece; and take me, take me with you! for I dare not stay after you are gone; for my father will kill me miserably, if he knows what I have done."

And Theseus stood silent awhile; for he was astonished and confounded by her beauty: but at last he said, "I cannot go home in peace, till I have seen and slain this Minotaur, and avenged the deaths of the youths and maidens, and put an end to the terrors of my land."

"And will you kill the Minotaur? How, then?"

"I know not, nor do I care: but he must be strong if he be too strong for me."

Then she loved him all the more, and said, "But when you have killed him, how will you find your way out of the labyrinth?"

"I know not, neither do I care: but it must be a strange road, if I do not find it out before I have eaten up the monster's carcase."

Then she loved him all the more, and said,

"Fair youth, you are too bold; but I can help you, weak as I am. I will give you a sword, and with that, perhaps, you may slay the beast; and a clue of thread,

and by that, perhaps, you may find your way out again. Only promise me, that if you escape safe, you will take me home with you to Greece ; for my father will surely kill me, if he knows what I have done."

Then Theseus laughed, and said, " Am I not safe enough now ? " And he hid the sword in his bosom, and rolled up the clue in his hand ; and then he swore to Ariadne, and fell down before her, and kissed her hands and her feet ; and she wept over him a long while, and then went away ; and Theseus lay down and slept sweetly.

And when the evening came, the guards came in and led him away to the labyrinth.

And he went down into that doleful gulf, through winding paths among the rocks, under caverns, and arches, and galleries, and over heaps of fallen stone. And he turned on the left hand, and on the right hand, and went up and down, till his head was dizzy ; but all the while he held his clue. For when he went in he had fastened it to a stone, and left it to unroll out of his hand as he went on ; and it lasted him till he met the Minotaur, in a narrow chasm between black cliffs.

And when he saw him he stopped awhile, for he had never seen so strange a beast. His body was a man's ; but his head was the head of a bull ; and his teeth were the teeth of a lion ; and with them he tore his prey. And when he saw Theseus he roared, and put his head down, and rushed right at him.

But Theseus stepped aside nimbly, and as he passed by, cut him in the knee ; and ere he could turn in the narrow path, he followed him, and stabbed him again and again from behind, till the monster fled bellowing wildly ; for he had never before felt a wound. And Theseus followed him at full speed, holding the clue of thread in his left hand.

Then on, through cavern after cavern, under dark ribs of sounding stone, and up rough glens and torrent beds, among the sunless roots of Ida, and to the edge of the eternal snow, went they, the hunter and the hunted, while the hills bellowed to the monster's bellow.

And at last Theseus came up with him, where he lay panting on a slab among the snow, and caught him by the horns, and forced his head back, and drove the keen sword through his throat.

Then he turned, and went back limping and weary, feeling his way down by the clue of thread, till he came to the mouth of that doleful place; and saw waiting for him, whom but Ariadne!

And he whispered, "It is done!" and showed her the sword; and she laid her finger on her lips, and led him to the prison, and opened the doors, and set all the prisoners free, while the guards lay sleeping heavily; for she had silenced them with wine.

Then they fled to their ship together, and leapt on board, and hoisted up the sail; and the night lay dark around them, so that they past through Mino's ships, and escaped all safe to Naxos; and there Ariadne became Theseus's wife.

PART IV.

HOW THESEUS FELL BY HIS PRIDE.

BUT that fair Ariadne never came to Athens with her husband. Some say that Theseus left her sleeping on Naxos among the Cyclades ; and that Dionusos the wine-king found her, and took her up into the sky, as you shall see some day in a painting of old Titian's, one of the most glorious pictures upon earth. And some say that Dionusos drove away Theseus, and took Ariadne from him by force : but however that may be, in his haste or in his grief, Theseus forgot to put up the white sail. Now Ægeus his father sat and watched on Sunium day after day, and strained his old eyes across the sea, to see the ship afar. And when he saw the black sail, and not the white one, he gave up Theseus for dead, and in his grief he fell into the sea, and died ; so it is called the Ægean to this day.

And now Theseus was king of Athens, and he guarded it and ruled it well.

For he killed the bull of Marathon, which had killed Androgeos, Minos's son ; and he drove back the famous Amazons, the warlike women of the East, when they came from Asia, and conquered all Hellas, and broke into Athens itself. But Theseus stopped them there, and conquered them, and took Hippolute their queen to be his wife. Then he went out to fight against the Lapithai, and Peirithoos their famous king : but when the two heroes came face to face they loved each other, and embraced, and became noble friends ; so that the friendship of

Theseus and Peirithoos is a proverb even now. And he gathered (so the Athenians say) all the boroughs of the land together, and knit them into one strong people, while before they were all parted and weak : and many another wise thing he did, so that his people honored him after he was dead, for many a hundred years, as the father of their freedom and their laws. And six hundred years after his death, in the famous fight at Marathon, men said that they saw the ghost of Theseus, with his mighty brazen club, fighting in the van of battle against the invading Persians, for the country which he loved. And twenty years after Marathon, his bones (they say) were found in Scyros, an isle beyond the sea ; and they were bigger than the bones of mortal man. So the Athenians brought them home in triumph ; and all the people came out to welcome them ; and they built over them a noble temple, and adorned it with sculptures and paintings, in which were told all the noble deeds of Theseus, and the Centaurs, and the Lapithai, and the Amazons ; and the ruins of it are standing still.

But why did they find his bones in Scyros ? Why did he not die in peace at Athens, and sleep by his father's side ? Because, after his triumph he grew proud, and broke the laws of God and man. And one thing worst of all he did, which brought him to his grave with sorrow. For he went down (they say beneath the earth) with that bold Peirithoos his friend, to help him to carry off Persephone, the queen of the world below. But Peirithoos was killed miserably, in the dark fire-kingdoms under ground ; and Theseus was chained to a rock in everlasting pain. And there he sat for years, till Heracles the mighty came down to bring up the three-headed dog who sits at Pluto's gate. So Heracles loosed him from his chain, and brought him up to the light once more.

But when he came back his people had forgotten him,

and Castor and Poludeuces, the sons of the wondrous Swan, had invaded his land, and carried off his mother Aithra for a slave, in revenge for a grievous wrong.

So the fair land of Athens was wasted, and another king ruled in it, who drove out Theseus shamefully, and he fled across the sea to Scuros. And there he lived in sadness, in the house of Lucomedes the king, till Lucomedes killed him by treachery, and there was an end of all his labors.

So it is still, my children, and so it will be to the end. In those old Greeks, and in us also, all strength and virtue come from God. But if men grow proud and self-willed, and misuse God's fair gifts, He lets them go their own ways, and fall pitifully, that the glory may be His alone. God help us all, and give us wisdom, and courage to do noble deeds ! but God keep pride from us when we have done them, lest we fall, and come to shame !

THE END.

POEMS.

BY

CHARLES KINGSLEY,



PREFACE.

BY THE

REV. F. D. MAURICE. M.A.

(1848.)

THE writer of this play does not differ with his countrymen generally, as to the nature and requirements of a Drama. He has learnt from our Great Masters that it should exhibit human beings engaged in some earnest struggle, certain outward aspects of which may possibly be a spectacle for the amusement of idlers, but which in itself is for the study and the sympathy of those who are struggling themselves. A Drama, he feels, should not aim at the inculcation of any definite maxim; the moral of it lies in the action and the character. It must be drawn out of them by the heart and experience of the reader, not forced upon him by the author. The men and women whom he presents are not to be his spokesmen; they are to utter themselves freely in such language, grave or mirthful, as best expresses what they feel and what they are. The age to which they belong is not to be contemplated as if it were apart from us; neither is it to be measured by our rules; to be held up as a model; to be condemned for its strangeness. The passions which worked in it must be those which are working in ourselves. To the same eternal laws and principles are we, and it, amenable. By beholding these a poet is to raise himself, and may hope to raise his readers, above antiquarian tastes and modern conventions. The unity of the play cannot be conferred upon it by any artificial arrangements; it must depend upon the relation of the different persons and events to the central subject. No nice adjustments of success and failure to

right and wrong must constitute its poetical justice ; the conscience of the readers must be satisfied in some deeper way than this, that there is an order in the universe, and that the poet has perceived and asserted it.

Long before these principles were reduced into formal canons of orthodoxy, even while they encountered the strong opposition of critics, they were unconsciously recognized by Englishmen as sound and national. Yet I question whether a clergyman writing in conformity with them might not have incurred censure in former times, and may not incur it now. The privilege of expressing his own thoughts, sufferings, sympathies, in any form of verse is easily conceded to him ; if he liked to use a dialogue instead of a monologue, for the purpose of enforcing a duty, or illustrating a doctrine, no one would find fault with him ; if he produced an actual Drama for the purpose of defending or denouncing a particular character, or period, or system of opinions, the compliments of one party might console him for the abuse or contempt of another.

But it seems to be supposed that he is bound to keep in view one or other of these ends : to divest himself of his own individuality that he may enter into the working of other spirits ; to lay aside the authority which pronounces one opinion, or one habit of mind, to be right and another wrong, that he may exhibit them in their actual strife ; to deal with questions, not in an abstract shape, but mixed up with the affections, passions, relations of human creatures, is a course which must lead him, it is thought, into a great forgetfulness of his office, and of all that is involved in it.

No one can have less interest than I have in claiming poetical privileges for the clergy ; and no one, I believe, is more thoroughly convinced that the standard which society prescribes for us, and to which we ordinarily conform ourselves, instead of being too severe and lofty, is far too secular and grovelling. But I apprehend the limitations of this kind which are imposed upon us are themselves exceedingly secular, betokening an entire misconception of the nature of our work, proceeding from maxims and habits which tend to make it utterly insignificant and abortive. If a man confines himself to the utterance of his own experiences, those experiences are likely to become

every day more narrow and less real. If he confines himself to the defence of certain propositions, he is sure gradually to lose all sense of the connection between those propositions and his own life, or the life of man. In either case he becomes utterly ineffectual as a teacher. Those whose education and character are different from his own, whose processes of mind have therefore been different, are utterly unintelligible to him. Even a cordial desire for sympathy is not able to break through the prickly hedge of habits, notions, and technicalities which separates them. Oftentimes the desire itself is extinguished in those who ought to cherish it most, by the fear of meeting with something portentous or dangerous. Nor can he defend a dogma better than he communes with men; for he knows not that which attacks it. He supposes it to be a set of book arguments, whereas it is something lying very deep in the heart of the disputant, into which he has never penetrated.

Hence there is a general complaint that we 'are ignorant of the thoughts and feelings of our contemporaries'; most attribute this to a fear of looking below the surface, lest we should find hollowness within; many like to have it so, because they have thus an excuse for despising us. But surely such an ignorance is more inexcusable in us, than in the priests of any nation: we, less than any, are kept from the sun and air; our discipline is less than any contrived merely to make us acquainted with the commonplaces of divinity. We are enabled, nay, obliged, from our youth upwards, to mix with people of our own age, who are destined for all occupations and modes of life; to share in their studies, the enjoyments, their perplexities, their temptations. Experience, often so dearly bought, is surely not meant to be thrown away: whether it has been obtained without the sacrifice of that which is most precious or whether the lost blessing has been restored twofold, and good is understood, not only as the opposite of evil, but as the deliverance from it, we cannot be meant to forget all that we have been learning. The teachers of other nations may reasonably mock us, as having less of direct book-lore than themselves; they should not be able to say, that we are without the compensation of knowing a little more of living creatures.

A clergyman, it seems to me, should be better able than

other men to cast aside that which is merely accidental, either in his own character, or in the character of the age to which he belongs, and to apprehend that which is essential and eternal. His acceptance of fixed creeds, which belong as much to one generation as another, and which have survived amid all changes and convulsions, should raise him especially above the temptation to exalt the fashion of his own time, of or any past one ; above the affectation of the obsolete, above slavery to the present, and above that strange mixture of both which some display, who weep because the beautiful visions of the Past are departed, and admire themselves for being able to weep over them—and dispense with them. His reverence for the Bible should make him feel that we must realize our own personality when we most connect it with that of our fellow-men ; that acts are not to be contemplated apart from the actor ; that more of what is acceptable to the God of Truth may come forth in men striving with infinite confusion, and often uttering words like the east-wind than in those who can discourse calmly and eloquently about a righteousness and mercy, which they know only by hearsay. The belief which a minister of God has in the eternity of the distinction between right and wrong should especially dispose him to recognize that distinction apart from mere circumstance and opinion. The confidence which he must have that the life of each man, and the life of this world, is a drama, in which a perfectly Good and True Being is unveiling His own purposes, and carrying on a conflict with evil, which must issue in complete victory, should make him eager to discover in every portion of history, in every biography, a divine 'Morality' and 'Mystery'—a morality, though it deals with no abstract personages—a mystery, though the subject of it be the doings of the most secular men.

The subject of this Play is certainly a dangerous one, it suggests questions which are deeply interesting at the present time. It involves the whole character and spirit of the Middle Ages. A person who had not an enthusiastic admiration for the character of Elizabeth would not be worthy to speak of her ; it seems to me, that he would be still less worthy, if he did not admire far more fervently that ideal of the female character which God has established, and not man—which she imper-

fectly realized—which often exhibited itself in her in spite of her own more confused, though apparently more lofty, ideal ; which may be manifested more simply, and therefore more perfectly, in the England of the nineteenth century, than in the Germany of the thirteenth. To enter into the meaning of self-sacrifice—to sympathize with any one who aims at it—not to be misled by counterfeits of it—not to be unjust to the truth which may be mixed with those counterfeits—is a difficult task, but a necessary one for any one who takes this work in hand. How far our author has attained these ends, others must decide. I am sure that he will not have failed from forgetting them. He has, I believe, faithfully studied all the documents of the period within his reach, making little use of modern narratives ; he has meditated upon the past in its connection with the present ; has never allowed his reading to become dry by disconnecting it with what he has seen and felt, or made his partial experiences a measure for the acts which they help him to understand. He has entered upon his work at least in a true and faithful spirit, not regarding it as an amusement for leisure hours, but as something to be done seriously, if done at all ; as if he was as much ‘under the Great Taskmaster’s eye’ in this as in any other duty of his calling. In certain passages and scenes he seemed to me to have been a little too bold for the taste and temper of this age. But having written them deliberately, from a conviction that morality is in peril from fastidiousness, and that it is not safe to look at questions which are really agitating people’s hearts merely from the outside—he has, and I believe rightly, retained what I should from cowardice have wished him to exclude. I have no doubt, that any one who wins a victory over the fear of opinion, and especially over the opinion of the religious world, strengthens his own moral character, and acquires a greater fitness for his high service.

Whether Poetry is again to revive among us, or whether the power is to be wholly stifled by our accurate notions about the laws and conditions under which it is to be exercised, is a question upon which there is room for great differences of opinion. Judging from the past, I should suppose that till Poetry becomes less self-conscious, less self-concentrated, more *drama-*

tical in spirit, if not in form, it will not have the qualities which can powerfully affect Englishmen. Not only were the Poets of our most national age dramatists, but there seems an evident dramatical tendency in those who wrote what we are wont to call narrative, or epic, poems. Take away the dramatic faculty from Chaucer, and the *Canterbury Tales* become indeed, what they have been most untruly called, mere versions of French or Italian Fables. Milton may have been right in changing the form of the *Paradise Lost*,—we are bound to believe that he was right ; for what appeal can there be against his genius? But he could not destroy the essentially dramatic character of a work which sets forth the battle between good and evil, and the Will of Man at once the Theatre and the Prize of the conflict. Is it not true, that there is in the very substance of the English mind, that which naturally predisposes us to sympathy with the Drama, and this though we are perhaps the most untheatrical of all people? The love of action, the impatience of abstraction, the equity which leads us to desire that every one may have a fair hearing, the reserve which had rather detect personal experience than have it announced—tendencies all easily perverted to evil, often leading to results the most contradictory, yet capable of the noblest cultivation—seem to explain the fact, that writers of this kind should have flourished so greatly among us, and that scarcely any others should permanently interest us.

These remarks do not concern poetical literature alone, or chiefly. Those habits of mind, of which I have spoken, ought to make us the best *historians*. If Germany has a right to claim the whole realm of the abstract, if Frenchmen understand the framework of society better than we do, there is in the national dramas of Shakespeare an historical secret, which neither the philosophy of the one nor the acute observation of the other can discover. Yet these dramas are almost the only satisfactory expression of that historical faculty which I believe is latent in us. The zeal of our factions, a result of our national activity, has made earnest history dishonest: our English justice has fled to indifferent and sceptical writers for the impartiality which it sought in vain elsewhere. This resource has failed,—the indifferentism of Hume could not secure him

against his Scotch prejudices, or against gross unfairness when anything disagreeably positive and vehement came in his way. Moreover, a practical people demand movement and life, not mere judging and balancing. For a time there was a reaction in favor of party history, but it could not last long ; already we are glad to seek in Ranke or Michelet that which seems denied us at home. Much, no doubt, may be gained from such sources ; but I am convinced that *this* is not the produce which we are meant generally to import ; for this we may trust to well-directed native industry. The time is, I hope, at hand, when those who are most in earnest will feel that therefore they are most bound to be just—when they will confess the exceeding wickedness of the desire to distort or suppress a fact, or misrepresent a character—when they will ask as solemnly to be delivered from the temptation to this, as to any crime which is punished by law.

The clergy ought especially to lead the way in this reformation. They have erred grievously in perverting history to their own purposes. What was a sin in others was in them a blasphemy, because they professed to acknowledge God as the Ruler of the world, and hereby they showed that they valued their own conclusions above the facts which reveal His order. They owe, therefore, a great *amende* to their country, and they should consider seriously how they can make it most effectually, I look upon this Play as an effort in this direction, which I trust may be followed by many more. On this ground alone, even if its poetical worth was less than I believe it is, I should, as a clergyman, be thankful for its publication.

INTRODUCTION.

THE story which I have here put into a dramatic form is one familiar to Romanists, and perfectly and circumstantially authenticated. Abridged versions of it, carefully softened and sentimentalized, may be read in any Romish collection of Lives of the Saints. An enlarged edition has been published in France, I believe by Count Montalembert, and translated, with illustrations, by an English gentleman, which admits certain miraculous legends, of later date, and, like other prodigies, worthless to the student of human character. From consulting this work I have hitherto abstained, in order that I might draw my facts and opinions, entire and unbiassed, from the original Biography of Elizabeth, by Dietrich of Appold, her contemporary, as given entire by Canisius.

Dietrich was born in Thuringia, near the scene of Elizabeth's labors, a few years before her death ; had conversed with those who had seen her, and calls to witness 'God and the elect angels,' that he had inserted nothing but what he had either understood from religious and veracious persons, or read in approved writings, viz. '*The Book of the Sayings of Elizabeth's Four Ladies (Guta, Isentrudis, and two others)*' ; '*The Letter which Conrad of Marpurg, her Director, wrote to Pope Gregory the Ninth*' (these two documents still exist) ; '*The Sermon of Otto (de Ordine Prædic.)*, which begins thus : '*Mulierem fortem.*'

'Not satisfied with these,' he 'visited monasteries, castles, and towns, interrogated the most aged and veracious persons, and wrote letters, seeking for completeness and truth in all things ;' and thus composed his biography, from which that in

Surius (*Acta Sanctorum*), Jacobus de Voragine, Alban Butler, and all others which I have seen, are copied with a very few additions and many prudent omissions.

Wishing to adhere strictly to historical truth, I have followed the received account, not only in the incidents, but often in the language which it attributes to its various characters; and have given in the Notes all necessary references to the biography in Canisius's collection. My part has therefore been merely to show how the conduct of my heroine was not only possible, but to a certain degree necessary, for a character of earnestness and piety such as hers, working under the influences of the Middle Age.

In deducing fairly, from the phenomena of her life, the character of Elizabeth, she necessarily became a type of two great mental struggles of the Middle Age; first, of that between Scriptural or unconscious, and Popish or conscious, purity: in a word, between innocence and prudery; next, of the struggle between healthy human affection, and the Manichean contempt with which a celibate clergy would have all men regard the names of husband, wife, and parent. To exhibit this latter falsehood in its miserable consequences, when received into a heart of insight and determination sufficient to follow out all belief to its ultimate practice, is the main object of my Poem. That a most degrading and agonizing contradiction on these points must have existed in the mind of Elizabeth, and of all who with similar characters shall have found themselves under similar influences, is a necessity that must be evident to all who know anything of the deeper affections of men. In the idea of a married Romish saint, these miseries should follow logically from the Romish view of human relations. In Elizabeth's case their existence is proved equally logically from the acknowledged facts of her conduct.

I may here observe, that if I have in no case made her allude to the Virgin Mary, and exhibited the sense of infinite duty and loyalty to Christ alone, as the mainspring of all her noblest deeds, it is merely in accordance with Dietrich's biography. The omission of all Mariolatry is remarkable. My business is to copy that omission, as I should in the opposite case have copied the introduction of Virgin-worship into the original tale.

The business of those who make Mary, to women especially, the complete substitute for the Saviour—I had almost said, for all Three Persons of the Trinity—is to explain, if they can, her non-appearance in this case.

Lewis, again, I have drawn as I found him, possessed of all virtues but those of action ; in knowledge, in moral courage, in spiritual attainment, infinitely inferior to his wife, and depending on her to be taught to pray ; giving her higher faculties nothing to rest on in himself, and leaving the noblest offices of a husband to be supplied by a spiritual director. He thus becomes a type of the husbands of the Middle Age, and of the woman-worship of chivalry. Woman-worship, ‘the honor due to the weaker vessel,’ is indeed of God, and woe to the nation and to the man in whom it dies. But in the Middle Age, this feeling had no religious root, by which it could connect itself rationally, either with actual wedlock or with the noble yearnings of men’s spirits, and it therefore could not but die down into a semi-sensual dream of female-saint-worship, or fantastic idolatry of mere physical beauty, leaving the women themselves an easy prey to the intellectual allurements of the more educated and subtle priesthood.

In Conrad’s case, again, I have fancied that I discover in the various notices of his life a noble nature warped and blinded by its unnatural exclusions from those family ties through which we first discern or describe God and our relations to Him, and forced to concentrate his whole faculties in the service, not so much of a God of Truth as of a Catholic system. In his character will be found, I hope, some implicit apology for the failings of such truly great men as Dunstan, Becket, and Dominic, and of many more whom, if we hate, we shall never understand, while we shall be but too likely, in our own way, to copy them.

Walter of Varila, a more fictitious character, represents the ‘healthy animalism’ of the Teutonic mind, with its mixture of deep earnestness and hearty merriment. His dislike of priestly sentimentalities is no anachronism. Even in his day, a noble lay-religion, founded on faith in the divine and universal symbolism of humanity and nature, was gradually arising, and venting itself, from time to time, as I conceive, through many most unsuspected channels, through chivalry, through the

minne-singers, through the lay inventors, or rather importers, of pointed architecture, through the German school of painting, through the politics of the free towns, till it attained complete freedom in Luther and his associate reformers. -

For my fantastic quotations of Scripture, if they shall be deemed irreverent, I can only say, that they were the fashion of the time, from prince to peasant—that there is scarcely one of them with which I have not actually met in the writings of the period—that those writings abound with misuse of Scripture, far more coarse, arbitrary, and ridiculous, than any which I have dared to insert—that I had no right to omit so radical a characteristic of the Middle Age.

For the more coarse and homely passages with which the drama is interspersed, I must make the same apology. I put them there because they were there—because the Middle Age was, in the gross, a coarse, barbarous and profligate age—because it was necessary, in order to bring out fairly the beauty of the central character, to show ‘the crooked and perverse generation’ in which she was ‘a child of God without rebuke.’ It was, in fact, the very ferocity and foulness of the time which, by a natural revulsion, called forth at the same time the Apostolic holiness and the Manichean asceticism of the Mediæval Saints. The world was so bad that, to be Saints at all, they were compelled to go out of the world. It was necessary, moreover, in depicting the poor man’s patroness, to show the material on which she worked; and those who know the poor, know also that we can no more judge truly of their characters in the presence of their benefactors, than we can tell by seeing clay in the potter’s hands what it was in its native pit. These scenes have, therefore, been laid principally in Elizabeth’s absence, in order to preserve their only use and meaning.

So rough and common a life-picture of the Middle Age will, I am afraid, whether faithful or not, be far from acceptable to those who take their notions of that period principally from such exquisite dreams as the fictions of Fouqué, and of certain moderns whose graceful minds, like some enchanted well,

In whose calm depths the pure and beautiful
Alone are mirrored,

are, on account of their very sweetness and simplicity, singularly unfitted to convey any true likeness of the coarse and stormy Middle Age. I have been already accused, by others than Romanists, of profaning this whole subject—*i.e.* of telling the whole truth, pleasant or not, about it. But really, time enough has been lost in ignorant abuse of that period, and time enough also, lately, in blind adoration of it. When shall we learn to see it as it was?—the dawning manhood of Europe—rich with all the tenderness, the simplicity, the enthusiasm of youth—but also darkened, alas! with its full share of youth's precipitance and extravagance, fierce passions and blind self-will—its virtues and its vices colossal, and, for that very reason, always haunted by the twin-imp of the colossal—the caricatured.

Lastly, the many miraculous stories which the biographer of Elizabeth relates of her, I had no right, for the sake of truth, to interweave in the plot, while it was necessary to indicate at least their existence. I have, therefore, put such of them as seemed least absurd into the mouth of Conrad, to whom, in fact, they owe their original publication, and have done so, as I hope, not without a just ethical purpose.

Such was my idea: of the inconsistencies and shortcomings of this its realization, no one can ever be so painfully sensible as I am already myself. If, however, this book shall cause one Englishman honestly to ask himself, 'I, as a Protestant, have been accustomed to assert the purity and dignity of the offices of husband, wife, and parent. Have I ever examined the grounds of my own assertion? Do I believe them to be as callings from God, spiritual, sacramental, divine, eternal? Or am I at heart regarding and using them, like the Papist, merely as heaven's indulgences to the infirmities of fallen man?'—then will my book have done its work.

If, again, it shall deter one young man from the example of those miserable dilettanti, who in books and sermons are whimpering meagre second-hand praises of celibacy—depreciating as carnal and degrading those family ties to which they owe their own existence, and in the enjoyment of which they themselves all the while unblushingly indulge—insulting thus their own wives and mothers—nibbling ignorantly at the very root of that household purity which constitutes the distinctive superior-

ity of Protestant over Popish nations—again my book will have done its work.

If, lastly, it shall awaken one pious Protestant to recognize, in some, at least, of the Saints of the Middle Age, beings not only of the same passions, but of the same Lord, the same faith, the same baptism, as themselves, *Protestants*, not the less deep and true, because utterly unconscious and practical—mighty witnesses against the two antichrists of their age—the tyranny of feudal caste, and the phantoms which Popery substitutes for the living Christ—then also will my little book indeed have done its work.

C. K.

1848.

THE SAINT'S TRAGEDY.

CHARACTERS.

ELIZABETH, *daughter of the King of Hungary.*

LEWIS, *Landgrave of Thuringia, betrothed to her in childhood.*

HENRY, *brother of Lewis.*

WALTER *of Varila,*

RUDOLF *the Cupbearer,*

LEUTOLF *of Erlstetten,*

HARTWIG *of Erba,*

COUNT HUGO,

COUNT OF SAYM, *etc.*

CONRAD *of Marpurg, a Monk, Commissioner for the suppression of heresy.*

GERARD, *his Chaplain.*

BISHOP OF BAMBERG, *uncle of Elizabeth, etc., etc.*

SOPHIA, *Dowager Landgravine.*

AGNES, *her daughter, sister of Lewis.*

ISENTRUDIS, *Elizabeth's nurse.*

GUTA, *her favorite maiden.*

Etc., etc., etc.

The Scene lies principally in Eisenach, and the Wartburg ; changing afterwards to Bamberg, and finally to Marpurg.

PROEM

(EPIMETHEUS)

I

WAKE again, Teutonic Father-ages,
Speak again, beloved primæval creeds;
Flash ancestral spirit from your pages,
Wake the greedy age to noble deeds.

II

Tell us, how of old our saintly mothers
Schooled themselves by vigil, fast, and prayer,
Learnt to love as Jesus loved before them,
While they bore the cross which poor men bear.

III

Tell us how our stout crusading fathers
Fought and died for God, and not for gold;
Let their love, their faith, their boyish daring,
Distance-mellowed, gild the days of old,

IV

Tell us how the sexless workers, thronging,
Angel-tended, round the convent doors,
Wrought to Christian faith and holy order
Savage hearts alike and barren moors.

V

Ye who built the churches where we worship,
Ye who framed the laws by which we move,
Fathers, long belied, and long forsaken,
Oh ! forgive the children of your love !

PROEM

• (PROMETHEUS)

I

Speak ! but ask us not to be as ye were !
All but God is changing day by day.
He who breathes on man the plastic spirit
Bids us mould ourselves its robe of clay,

II

Old anarchic floods of revolution,
Drowning ill and good alike in night,
Sink, and bare the wrecks of ancient labor,
Fossil-teeming, to the searching light.

III

There will we find laws, which shall interpret,
Through the simpler past, existing life ;
Delving up from mines and fairy caverns
Charmed blades, to cut the age's strife,

IV

What though fogs may stream from draining waters ?
We will till the clays to mellow loam ;
Wake the graveyard of our fathers' spirits ;
Clothe its crumbling mounds with blade and bloom.

V

Old decays but foster new creations ;
Bones and ashes feed the golden corn ;
Fresh elixirs wander every moment,
Down the veins through which the live past feeds its
child, the live unborn.

THE SAINT'S TRAGEDY

ACT I

SCENE I. A. D. 1220

The Doorway of a closed Chapel in the Wartburg.
ELIZABETH *sitting on the Steps.*

Eliz. BABY JESUS, who dost lie
Far above that stormy sky,
In Thy mother's pure caress,
Stoop and save the motherless.

Happy birds ! whom Jesus leaves
Underneath His sheltering eaves ;
There they go to play and sleep,
May not I go in to weep ?

All without is mean and small ,
All within is vast and tall ;
All without is harsh and shrill,
All within is hushed and still.

Jesus, let me enter in,
Wrap me safe from noise and sin.
Let me list the angels' songs,
See the picture of Thy wrongs ;

Let me kiss Thy wounded feet,
Drink Thine incense, faint and sweet,
While the clear bells call Thee down
From Thine everlasting throne.

At thy door-step low I bend,
Who have neither kin nor friend ;
Let me here a shelter find,
Shield the shorn lamb from the wind.

Jesu, Lord, my heart will break :
Save me for thy great love's sake !

Enter ISENTRUDIS.

Isen. Aha ! I had missed my little bird from the nest,
And judged that she was here. What's this ! fie, tears ?

Eliz. Go ! you despise me like the rest.

Isen. Despise you ?
What's here ? King Andrew's child ? St. John's sworn
maid ?

Who dares despise you ? Out upon these Saxons !
They sang another note when I was younger,
When from the rich East came my queenly pearl,
Lapt on this fluttering heart, while mighty heroes
Rode by her side, and far behind us stretched
The barbs and sumpter mules, a royal train,
Laden with silks and furs, and priceless gems,
Wedges of gold, and furniture of silver,
Fit for my princess.

Eliz. Hush now, I've heard all, nurse,
A thousand times.

Isen. Oh, how their hungry mouths
Did water at the booty ! Such a prize,
Since the three Kings came wandering into Cöln,
They ne'er saw, nor their fathers ;—well they knew it !
Oh, how they fawned on us ! 'Great Isentrudis !'
'Sweet babe !' The Landgravine did thank her saints
As if you or your silks, had fallen from heaven ;
And now she wears your furs, and calls us gipsies.
Come tell your nurse your griefs ; we'll weep together,
Strangers in this strange land.

Eliz. I am most friendless.
The Landgravine and Agnes—you may see them
Begrudge the food I eat, and call me friend
Of knaves and serving-maids ; the burly knights

Freeze me with cold blue eyes : no saucy page
But points and whispers, 'There goes our pet nun ;
Would but her saintship leave her gold behind,
We'd give herself her furlough.' Save me ! save me !
All here are ghastly dreams ; dead masks of stone,
And you and I, and Guta, only live ;
Your eyes alone have souls. I shall go mad !
Oh that they would but leave me all alone
To teach poor girls, and work within my chamber,
With mine own thoughts, and all the gentle angels
Which glance about my dreams at morning-tide !
Then I should be happy as the birds
Which sing at my bower window. Once I longed
To be beloved,—now would they but forget me !
Most vile I must be, or they could not hate me !

Isen. They are of this world, thou art not, poor child,
Therefore they hate thee, as they did thy betters.

Eliz. But, Lewis, nurse.

Isen. He, child ? he is thy knight ;
Espoused from childhood : thou hast a claim upon him.
One that thou'lt need, alas !—though, I remember—
'Tis fifteen years ago—when in one cradle
We laid two fair babes for a marriage token ;
And when your lips met, then you smiled, and twined
Your little limbs together.—Pray the Saints
That token stand !—He calls thee love and sister,
And brings thee gew-gaws from the wars : that's much
At least he's thine if thou love him.

Eliz. If I love him ?
What is this love ? Why, is he not my brother
And I his sister ? Till these weary wars,
The one of us without the other never
Did weep or laugh : what is't should change us now ?
You shake your head and smile.

Isen. Go to ; the chafe
Comes not by wearing chains, but feeling them.

Eliz. Alas ! here comes a knight across the court ;
Oh, hide me, nurse ! What's here ? this door is fast.

Isen. Nay, 'tis a friend : he brought my princess hither,
Walter of Varila ; I feared him once—
He used to mock our state, and say, good wine
Should want no bush, and that the cage was gay,

But that the bird must sing before he praised it.
 Yet he's a kind heart, while his bitter tongue
 Awes these court popinjays at times to manners.
 He will smile sadly too, when he meets my maiden;
 And once he said, he was your liegeman sworn,
 Since my lost mistress, weeping, to his charge
 Trusted the babes she saw no more.—God help us!

Eliz. How did my mother die, nurse?

Isen. She died, my child.

Eliz. But how? Why turn away?

Too long I've guessed at some dread mystery
 I may not hear: and in my restless dreams,
 Night after night, sweeps by a frantic rout
 Of grinning fiends, fierce horses, bodiless hands,
 Which clutch at one to whom my spirit yearns
 As to a mother. There's some fearful tie
 Between me and that spirit-world, which God
 Brands with his terrors on my troubled mind.
 Speak! tell me, nurse! is she in heaven or hell?

Isen. God knows, my child: there are masses for her
 soul

Each day in every Zingar minster sung.

Eliz. But was she holy?—Died she in the Lord?

Isen. (*weeps*). O God! my child! And if I told thee
 all,

How couldst thou mend it?

Eliz.

Mend it? O my Saviour!

I'd die a saint!

Win heaven for her by prayers, and build great minsters,
 Chantries, and hospitals for her; wipe out
 By mighty deeds our race's guilt and shame—
 But thus, poor witless orphan! (*Weeps.*)

COUNT WALTER enters.

Wal. Ah! my princess! accept your liegeman's knee;
 Down, down, rheumatic flesh!

Eliz. Ah! Count Walter! you are too tall to kneel to
 little girls.

Wal. What? shall two hundredweight of hypocrisy bow
 down to his four-inch wooden saint, and the same weight
 of honesty not worship his four-foot live one? And I

have a jest for you, shall make my small queen merry and wise.

Isen. You shall jest long before she's merry.

Wal. Ah ! dowers and dowagers again ! The money —root of all evil.

What comes here ?

[*A Page enters.*

A long-winged grasshopper, all gold, green, and gauze ? How these young pea-chicks must needs ape the grown peacock's frippery ! Prithee, now, how many such butterflies as you suck here together on the thistle-head of royalty ?

Page. Some twelve gentlemen of us, Sir—apostles of the blind archer, Love—owning no divinity but almighty beauty—no faith, no hope, no charity, but those which are kindled at her eyes.

Wal. Saints ! what's all this ?

Page. Ah, Sir ? none but countrymen swear by the saints nowadays : no oaths but allegorical ones, Sir, at the high table ; as thus, — ' By the sleeve of beauty, Madam ; ' or again, ' By Love his martyrdoms, Sir Count ; ' or to a potentate, ' As Jove's imperial mercy shall hear my vows, High Mightiness. '

Wal. Where did the evil one set you on finding all this heathenry ?

Page. Oh, we are all barristers of Love's court, Sir ; we have Ovid's gay science conned, Sir, *ad unguentum*, as they say, out of the French book.

Wal. So ? There are those come from Rome then will whip you and Ovid out with the same rod which the dandies of Provence felt lately to their sorrow. Oh, what blinkards are we gentlemen, to train any dumb beasts more carefully than we do Christians ! that a man shall keep his dog-breakers, and his horse-breakers, and his hawk-breakers, and never hire him a boy-breaker or two ! that we should live without a qualm at dangling such a flock of mimicking parroquets at our heels a while, and then, when they are well infected, well perfumed with the wind of our vices, dropping them off, as tadpoles do their tails, joint by joint into the mud ! to strain at such gnats as an ill-mouthed colt or a riotous puppy, and swallow that camel of camels, a page !

Page. Do you call me a camel, Sir ?

Wal. What's your business?

Page. My errand is to the Princess here.

Eliz. To me?

Page. Yes; the Landgravine expects you at high mass; so go in, and mind you clean yourself; for every one is not as fond as you of beggars' brats, and what their clothes leave behind them.

Isen. (*strikes him*). Monkey! to whom are you speaking?

Eliz. Oh, peace, peace, peace! I'll go with him.

Page. Then be quick, my music-master's waiting. Corpo di Bacco! as if our elders did not teach us to whom we ought to be rude! [*Ex. ELIZ. and PAGE.*]

Isen. See here, Sir Saxon, how this pearl of price
Is faring in your hands! The peerless image,
To whom this court is but the tawdry frame,—
The speck of light amid its murky baseness,—
The salt which keeps it all from rotting,—cast
To be the common fool,—the laughing stock
For every beardless knave to whet his wit on!
Tar-blooded Germans!—Here's another of them.

[*A young Knight enters.*]

Knight. Heigh! Count! What? Learning to sing
psalms? They are waiting
For you in the manage-school, to give your judgment
On that new Norman mare.

Wal. Tell them I'm busy.

Knight. Busy? St. Martin! Knitting stockings, eh?
To clothe the poor withal? Is that your business?
I passed that canting baby on the stairs;
Would heaven that she had tripped, and broke her goose-
neck,
And left us heirs *de facto*. So, farewell. [*Exit.*]

Wal. A very pretty quarrel! matter enough
To spoil a wagon-load of ash-staves on,
And break a dozen fools' backs across their cantlets.
What's Lewis doing?

Isen. Oh—befooled,—
Bewitched with dogs and horses, like an idiot
Clutching his bauble, while a priceless jewel
Sticks at his miry heels.

Wal. The boy's no fool,—

As good a heart as hers, but somewhat given
To hunt the nearest butterfly, and light
The fire of fancy without hanging o'er it
The porridge-pot of practice. He shall hear or——

Isen. And quickly, for there's treason in the wind.
They'll keep her dower, and send her home with shame
Before the year's out.

Wal. Humph! Some are rogues enough for't.
As it falls out, I ride with him to-day.

Isen. Upon what business?

Wal. Some shaveling has been telling him that there are
heretics on his land: Stadings, worshippers of black cats,
baby-eaters and such like. He consulted me; I told him
it would be time enough to see to the heretics when all
the good Christians had been well looked after. I suppose
the novelty of the thing smit him, for now nothing will
serve but I must ride with him round half a dozen hamlets,
where, with God's help, I will show him a mansty or two,
that shall astonish his delicate chivalry.

Isen. Oh, here's your time! Speak to him, noble
Walter.

Stun his dull ears with praises of her grace;
Prick his dull heart with shame at his own coldness.
Oh right us, Count.

Wal. I will, I will: go in
And dry your eyes. [*Exeunt separately.*]

SCENE II.

A Landscape in Thuringia. LEWIS and WALTER riding.

Lewis. So all these lands are mine; these yellow
meads—

These village greens, and forest-fretted hills,
With dizzy castles crowned. Mine! Why that word
Is rich in promise, in the action bankrupt.
What faculty of mine, save dream-fed pride,
Can these things fatten? Mass! I had forgot:
I have a right to bark at trespassers.
Rare privilege! While every fowl and bush,
According to its destiny and nature
(Which were they truly mine, my power could alter),

Will live, and grow, and take no thought of me.
 Those firs, before whose stealthy-marching ranks
 The world-old oaks still dwindle and retreat,
 If I could stay their poisoned frown, which crows
 The pale shrunk underwood, and nestled seeds
 Into an age of sleep, 'twere something : and those men
 O'er whom that one word 'ownership' uprears me—
 If I could make them lift a finger up
 But of their own free will, I'd own my seizin.
 But now—when if I sold them, life and limb,
 There's not a sow would litter one pig less
 Than when men called her mine.—Possession's naught ;
 A parchment ghost ; a word I am ashamed
 To claim even here, lest all the forest spirits,
 And bees who drain unasked the free-born flowers,
 Should mock, and cry, ' Vain man, not thine, but ours.'
Wal. Possession's naught ? Possession's beef and ale—
 Soft bed, fair wife, gay horse, good steel.—Are they
 naught ?

Possession means to sit astride of the world,
 Instead of having it astride of you ;
 Is that naught ? 'Tis the easiest trade of all too ;
 For he that's fit for nothing else, is fit
 To own good land, and on the slowest dolt
 His state sits easiest, while his serfs thrive best.

Lewis. How now ? What need then of long discipline,
 Not to mere feats of arms, but feats of soul ;
 To courtesies and high self-sacrifice,
 To order and obedience, and the grace
 Which makes commands, requests, and service, favor ?
 To faith and prayer, and pure thoughts, ever turned
 To that Valhalla, where the virgin saints
 And stainless heroes tend the Queen of heaven ?
 Why these, if I but need, like stalled ox
 To chew the grass cut for me ?

Wal. Why ? Because
 I have trained thee for a knight, boy, not a ruler.
 All callings want their proper 'prentice time
 But this of ruling ; it comes by mother-wit ;
 And if the wit be not exceeding great,
 'Tis best the wit be most exceeding small ;
 And he that holds the reins should let the horse

Range on, feed where he will, live and let live.
Custom and selfishness will keep all steady
For half a life.—Six months before you die
You may begin to think of interfering.

Lewis. Alas! while each day blackens with fresh
clouds,

Complaints of ague, fever, crumbling huts,
Of land thrown out to the forest, game and keepers,
Bailiffs and barons, plundering all alike;
Need, greed, stupidity: To clear such ruin
Would task the rich prime of some noble hero—
But can I nothing do?

Wal. Oh! plenty, Sir;
Which no man yet has done or e'er will do.
It rests with you, whether the priest be honored;
It rests with you, whether the knight be knightly;
It rests with you, whether those fields grow corn;
It rests with you, whether those toiling peasants
Lift to their masters free and loyal eyes,
Or crawl, like jaded hacks, to welcome graves.
It rests with you—and will rest.

Lewis. I'll crowd my court and dais with men of God,
As doth my peerless namesake, King of France.

Wal. Priests, Sir? The Frenchman keeps two coun-
sellors
Worth any drove of priests.

Lewis. And who are they?

Wal. God and his lady-love. (*aside*) He'll open at
that—

Lewis. I could be that man's squire.

Wal. (*aside*) Again run riot—
Now for another cast. (*aloud*) If you'd sleep sound, Sir,
You'll let priest pray for you, but school you never.

Lewis. Mass! who more fitted?

Wal. None, if you could trust them;
But they are the people's creatures; poor men give them
Their power at the church, and take it back at the ale-
house;

Then what's the friar to the starving peasant?
Just what the abbot is to the greedy noble—
A scarecrow to lear wolves. Go ask the church plate,
Safe in knights' cellars, how these priests are feared.

Bruised reeds when you most need them.—No, my Lord ;
Copy them, trust them never.

Lewis.

Copy ? wherein ?

Wal.

In letting every man

Do what he likes, and only seeing he does it
As you do your work—well. That's the Church secret
For breeding towns, as fast as you breed roe-deer ;
Example, but not meddling. See that hollow—
I knew it once all heath, and deep peat-bog—
I drowned a black mare in that self-same spot
Hunting with your good father : Well, he gave
One jovial night, to six poor Erfurt monks—
Six picked-visaged, wan, bird-fingered wights—
All in their rough hair shirts, like hedgehogs starved—
I told them, six weeks' work would break their hearts :
They answered, Christ would help, and Christ's great
mother,
And make them strong when weakest : So they settled :
And starved and froze.

Lewis.

And dug and built, it seems.

Wal. Faith, that's true. See, as garden walls draw
snails,

They have drawn a hamlet round ; the slopes are blue,
Knee-deep with flax, the orchard boughs are breaking
With strange outlandish fruits. See those young rogues
Marching to school ; no poachers here, Lord Land-
grave,—

Too much to be done at home ; there's not a village
Of yours, now, thrives like this. By God's good help
These men have made their ownership worth something.
Here comes one of them.

Lewis.

I would speak to him—

And learn his secret.—We'll await him here.

Enter CONRAD.

Con. Peace to you, reverend and war-worn knight,
And you, fair youth, upon whose swarthy lip
Blooms the rich promise of a noble manhood.
Methinks, if simple monks may read your thoughts,
That with no envious or distasteful eyes
Ye watch the labors of God's poor elect.

Wal. Why—we were saying, how you cunning rooks

Pitch as by instinct on the fattest fallows.

Con. For he who feeds the ravens, promiseth
Our bread and water sure, and leads us on
By peaceful streams in pastures green to lie,
Beneath our Shepherd's eye.

Lewis. In such a nook, now,
To nestle from this noisy world——

Con. And drop
The burden of thyself upon the threshold.

Lewis. Think what rich dreams may haunt those lowly
roofs !

Con. Rich dreams,—and more ; their dreams will find
fulfillment——

Their discipline breeds strength—'Tis we alone
Can join the patience of the laboring ox
Unto the eagle's foresight,—not a fancy
Of ours, but grows in time to mighty deeds ;
Victories in heavenly warfare : but yours, yours, Sir,
Oh, choke them, choke the panting hopes of youth,
Ere they be born, and wither in slow pains,
Cast by for the next bauble !

Lewis. 'Tis too true !

I dread no toil ; toil is the true knight's pastime—
Faith fails, the will intense and fixed, so easy
To thee, cut off from life and love, whose powers
In one close channel must condense their stream :
But I, to whom this life blooms rich and busy,
Whose heart goes out a-Maying all the year
In this new Eden—in my fitful thought
What skill is there, to turn my faith to sight—
To pierce blank Heaven, like some trained falconer
After his game, beyond all human ken ?

Wal. And walk into the bog beneath your feet.

Con. And change it to firm land by magic step !
Build there cloud-cleaving spires, beneath whose shade
Great cities rise for vassals ; to call forth
From plough and loom the rank unlettered hinds,
And make them saints and heroes—send them forth
To sway with heavenly craft the spirit of princes ;
Change nations' destinies, and conquer worlds
With love, more mighty than the sword ; what, Count ?
Art thou ambitious ? practical ? we monks

Can teach you somewhat there too.

Lewis.

Be it so ;

But love you have forsworn ; and what were life
Without that chivalry, which bends man's knees
Before God's image and his glory, best
Revealed in woman's beauty ?

Con.

Ah ! poor worldlings .

Little you dream what maddening ecstasies,
What rich ideals haunt, by day and night,
Alone, and in the crowd, even to the death,
The servitors of that celestial court
Where peerless Mary, sun-enthroned, reigns,
In whom all Eden dreams of womanhood,
All grace of form, hue, sound, all beauty strewn
Like pearls unstrung, about this ruined world,
Have their fulfilment and their archetype.
Why hath the rose its scent, the lily grace ?
To mirror forth her loveliness, from whom,
Primeval fount of grace, their livery came :
Pattern of Seraphs ! only worthy ark
To bear her God athwart the floods of time !

Lewis. Who dare aspire to her ? Alas, not I !
To me she is a doctrine, and a picture :—
I cannot live on dreams.

Con.

She hath her train :—

There thou may'st choose thy love : If world-wide lore
Shall please thee, and the Cherub's glance of fire,
Let Catharine lift thy soul, and rapt with her
Question the mighty dead, until thou float
Tranced on the ethereal ocean of her spirit.
If pity father passion in thee, hang
Above Eulalia's tortured loveliness ;
And for her sake, and in her strength, go forth
To do and suffer greatly. Dost thou long
For some rich heart, as deep in love as weakness,
Whose wild simplicity sweet heaven-born instincts
Alone keep sane ?

Lewis.

I do, I do. I'd live

And die for each and all the three.

Con.

Then go—

Entangled in the Magdalen's tresses lie ;
Dream hours before her picture, till thy lips

Dare to approach her feet, and thou shalt start
To find the canvass warm with life, and matter
A moment transubstantiate to heaven.

Wal. Ay, catch his fever, Sir, and learn to take
An indigestion for a troop of angels.
Come, tell him, monk, about your magic gardens,
Where not a stringy head of kale is cut
But breeds a vision or a revelation.

Lewis. Hush, hush, Count! Speak, strange monk,
strange words, and waken
Longings more strange than either.

Con. Then, if proved,
As I dare vouch thee, loyal in thy love,
Even to the Queen herself thy saintlier soul
At length may soar : perchance—Oh, bliss too great
For thought—yet possible !
Receive some token—smile—or hallowing touch
Of that white hand, beneath whose soft caress
The raging world is smoothed, and runs its course
To shadow forth her glory.

Lewis. Thou dost tempt me—
That were a knightly quest.

Con. Ay, here's true love.
Love's heaven, without its hell ; the golden fruit
Without the foul husk, which at Adam's fall
Did crust it o'er with filth and selfishness.
I tempt thee heavenward—from yon azure walls
Unearthly beauties beckon—God's own mother
Waits longing for thy choice—

Lewis. Is this a dream ?

Wal. Ay, by the Living Lord, who died for you !
Will you be cozened, Sir, by these air-blown fancies,
These male hysterics, by starvation bred
And huge conceit ? Cast off God's gift of manhood,
And, like the dog in the adage, drop the true bone
With snapping at the sham one in the water ?
What were you born a man for ?

Lewis. Ay, I know it :—
I cannot live on dreams. Oh for one friend,
Myself, yet not myself ; one not so high
But she could love me, not too pure to pardon
My sloth and meanness ! Oh for flesh and blood,

Before whose feet I could adore, yet love !
 How easy then were duty ! From her lips
 To learn my daily task ;—in her pure eyes
 To see the living type of those heaven-glories
 I dare not look on ;—let her work her will
 Of love and wisdom on these straining hinds ;—
 To squire a saint around her labor field,
 And she and it both mine :—That were possession !

Con. The flesh, fair youth——

Wal. Avaunt, bald snake, avaunt !
 We are past your burrow now. Come, come, Lord Land-
 grave,
 Look round, and find your saint.

Lewis. Alas ! one such—
 One such, I know, who upward from one cradle
 Beside me like a sister—No, thank God ! no sister !—
 Has grown and grown, and with her mellow shade
 Has blanched my thornless thoughts to her own hue,
 And even now is budding into blossom,
 Which never shall bear fruit, but inward still
 Resorb its vital nectar, self-contained,
 And leave no living copies of its beauty
 To after ages. Ah ! be less, sweet maid,
 Less than thyself ! Yet no—my wife thou might'st be,
 If less than thus—but not the saint thou art.
 What ! shall my selfish longings drag thee down
 From maid to wife ? degrade the soul I worship ?
 That were a caitiff deed ! Oh, misery !
 Is wedlock treason to that purity,
 Which is the jewel and the soul of wedlock ?
 Elizabeth ! my saint ! [Exit CONRAD]

Wal. What, Sir ? the Princess ?
 Ye saints in heaven, I thank you !

Lewis. Oh, who else,
 Who else the minutest lineament fulfils
 Of this my cherished portrait ?

Wal. So—'tis well.
 Hear me, my Lord.—You think this dainty princess
 Too perfect for you, eh ? That's well again ;
 For that whose price after fruition falls
 May well too high be rated ere enjoyed—
 In plain words,—if she looks an angel now, you will be

better mated than you expected, when you find her—a woman. For flesh and blood she is, and that young blood,—whom her childish misuse and your brotherly love ; her loneliness and your protection ; her springing fancy and (for I may speak to you as a son) your beauty and knightly grace, have so bewitched, and as some say, degraded, that briefly, she loves you, and briefly, better, her few friends fear, than you love her.

Lewis. Loves me ! My Count, that word is quickly spoken ;

And yet, if it be true, it thrusts me forth
Upon a shoreless sea of untried passion,
From whence is no return.

Wal. By Siegfried's sword,
My words are true, and I came here to say them,
To thee, my son in all but blood.
Mass, I'm no gossip. Why ? What ails the boy ?

Lewis. Loves me ! Henceforth let no man, peering
down

Through the dim glittering mine of future years,
Say to himself 'Too much ! this cannot be !'
To-day, and custom, wall up our horizon :
Before the hourly miracle of life
Blindfold we stand, and sigh, as though God were not.
I have wandered in the mountains, mist-bewildered,
And now a breeze comes, and the veil is lifted,
And priceless flowers, o'er which I trod unheeding,
Gleam ready for my grasp. She loves me then !
She who to me was as a nightingale
That sings in magic gardens, rock beleaguered,
To passing angels melancholy music—
Whose dark eyes hung, like far-off evening stars,
Through rosy-cushioned windows coldly shining
Down from the cloud-world of her unknown fancy—
She, for whom holiest touch of holiest knight
Seemed all too gross—who might have been a saint
And companied with angels—thus to pluck
The spotless rose of her own maidenhood
To give it unto me !

Wal. You love her then ?

Lewis. Look ! if yon solid mountain were all gold,
And each particular tree a band of jewels,

SCENE III.

A Chamber in the Castle. SOPHIA, ELIZABETH, AGNES,
ISENTRUDE, etc., *re-entering*.

Soph. What! you will not? You hear, Dame Isen-
trude,

She will not wear her coronet in the church,
Because, forsooth, the crucifix within
Is crowned with thorns. You hear her.

Eliz. Noble mother!

How could I flaunt this bauble in His face
Who hung there, naked, bleeding, all for me—
I felt it shamelessness to go so gay.

Soph. Felt? What then? Every foolish wench has
feelings

In these religious days, and thinks it carnal
To wash her dishes, and obey her parents—
No wonder they ape you, if you ape them—
Go to! I hate this humble-minded pride,
Self-willed submission—to your own pert fancies;
This fog-bred mushroom-spawn of brain-sick wits,
Who make their oddities their test for grace,
And peer about to catch the general eye;
Ah! I have watched you throw your playmates down
To have the pleasure of kneeling for their pardon.
Here's sanctity—to shame your cousin and me—
Spurn rank and proper pride, and decency;—
If God has made you noble, use your rank,
If you but know how. You Landgravine? You mated
With gentle Lewis? Why, belike you'll cowl him,
As that stern prude, your aunt, cowed her poor spouse;
No—one Hedwiga at a time's enough,—
My son shall die no monk.

Isen.

Beseech you, Madam,—

Weep not, my darling.

Soph.

Tut—I'll speak my mind.

We'll have no saints. Thank heaven, my saintliness
Ne'er troubled my good man, by day or night.
We'll have no saints, I say; far better for you,
And no doubt pleasanter—You know your place—
At least you know your place,—to take to cloisters,

And there sit carding wool, and mumbling Latin,
 With sour old maids, and maundering Magdalens,
 Proud of your frost-kibed feet, and dirty serge.
 There's nothing noble in you, but your blood ;
 And that one almost doubts. Who art thou, child ?

Isen. The daughter, please your highness,
 Of Andreas, King of Hungary, your better ;
 And your son's spouse.

Soph. I had forgotten, truly—
 And you, Dame Isentrudis, are her servant,
 And mine : come, Agnes, leave the gipsy ladies
 To say their prayers, and set the Saints the fashion.

[SOPHIA and AGNES go out.]

Isen. Proud hussy ! Thou shalt set thy foot on her neck
 yet, darling,
 When thou art Landgravine.

Eliz. And when will that be ?
 No, she speaks truth ! I should have been a nun.
 These are the wages of my cowardice,—
 Too weak to face the world, too weak to leave it !

Guta. I'll take the veil with you.

Eliz. 'Twere but a moment's work,—
 To slip into the convent there below,
 And be at peace forever. And you, my nurse ?

Isen. I will go with thee, child, where'er thou goest.
 But Lewis ?

Eliz. Ah ! my brother ! No, I dare not—
 I dare not turn forever from this hope,
 Though it be dwindled to a thread of mist.
 Oh that we two could flee and leave this Babel !
 Oh if he were but some poor chapel-priest,
 In lonely mountain valleys far away ;
 And I his serving-maid, to work his vestments,
 And dress his scrap of food, and see him stand
 Before the altar like a rainbowed saint ;
 To take the blessed wafer from his hand,
 Confess my heart to him, and all night long
 Pray for him while he slept, or through the lattice
 Watch while he read, and see the holy thoughts
 Swell in his big deep eyes !—Alas ! that dream
 Is wilder than the one that's fading even now !
 Who's here ?

[A Page enters.]

Page. The Count of Varila, Madam, begs permission to speak with you.

Eliz. With me? What's this new terror?
Tell him I wait him.

Isen. (aside). Ah! my old heart sinks—
God send us rescue! Here the champion comes.

COUNT WALTER *enters.*

Wal. Most learned, fair, and sanctimonious Princess—
Plague, what comes next? I had something orthodox
ready;

'Tis dropped out by the way.—Mass! here's the pith
on't.—

Madam, I come a-wooing; and for one
Who is as only worthy of your love,
As you of his; he bids me claim the spousals
Made long ago between you,—and yet leaves
Your fancy free, to grant or pass that claim:
And being that Mercury is not my planet,
He hath advised himself to set herein,
With pen and ink, what seemed good to him,
As passport to this jewelled mirror, pledge
Unworthy of his worship. [*Gives a letter and jewel.*]

Isen. Nunc Domine dimittis servam tuam!

*Elizabeth looks over the letter and casket, claps her hands
and bursts into childish laughter.*

Why here's my Christmas tree come after Lent—
Espousals? pledges? by our childish love?
Pretty words for folks to think of at the wars,—
And pretty presents come of them! Look, Guta!
A crystal clear, and carven on the reverse
The blessed rood. He told me once—one night,
When we did sit in the garden—What was I saying?

Wal. My fairest Princess, as ambassador,
What shall I answer?

Eliz. Tell him—tell him—God!
Have I grown mad, or a child, within the moment?
The earth has lost her gray, sad hue, and blazes
With her old life-light; hark! yon wind's a song—
Those clouds are angels' robes.—That fiery west
Is paved with smiling faces.—I am a woman,

And all things bid me love ! my dignity
 Is thus to cast my virgin pride away,
 And find my strength in weakness.—Busy brain !
 Thou keep'st pace with my heart ; old lore, old fancies,
 Buried for years, leap from their tombs, and proffer
 Their magic service to my new-born spirit.
 I'll go—I am not mistress of myself—
 Send for him—bring him to me—he is mine ! [Exit.

Isen. Ah ! blessed Saints ! how changed upon the moment !

She is grown taller, trust me, and her eye
 Flames like a fresh-caught hind's. She that was christened
 A brown mouse for her stillness ! Good my Lord !
 Now shall mine old bones see the grave in peace !

SCENE IV

The Bridal Feast. ELIZABETH, LEWIS, SOPHIA, and Company
 seated at the Dais table. Court Minstrel and Court Fool
 sitting on the Dais steps.

Min. How gaily smiles the heavens,
 The light winds whisper gay :
 For royal birth and knightly worth
 Are knit to one to-day

Fool (*drowning his voice*).
 So we'll flatter them up, and we'll cocker them
 up,
 Till we turn young brains ;
 And pamper the brach till we make her a wolf,
 And get bit by the legs for our pains.

Monks (*chanting without*).
 A fastu et superbiâ
 Domine libera nos.

Min. 'Neath sandal red and samité,
 Are knights and ladies set ;
 The henchmen tall stride through the hall,
 The board with wine is wet.

Fool. Oh ! merrily growls the starving hind,
 At my full skin ;
 And merrily howl wolf, wind and owl,
 While I lie warm within.

Monks. A luxu et avaritiâ
Domine libera nos.

Min. Hark ! from the bridal bower,
Rings out the bridesmaid's song ;
'Tis the mystic hour of an untried power,
The bride she tarries long.'

Fool. She's schooling herself and she's steeling herself,
Against the dreary day,
When she'll pine and sigh from her lattice high
For the knight that's far away.

Monks. A carnis illectamentis
Domine libera nos.

Min. Blest maid ! fresh roses o'er thee
The careless years shall fling ;
While days and nights shall new delights
To sense and fancy bring.

Fool. Satins and silks, and feathers and lace,
Will gild life's pill ;
In jewels and gold folks cannot grow old,
Fine ladies will never fall ill.

Monks. A vanitatibus sæculi
Domine libera nos.

[*SOPHIA descends from the Dais, leading ELIZABETH,
Ladies follow.*]

Sophia (to the Fool). Silence, you screech-owl.—
Come strew flowers, fair ladies,
And lead into our bower our fairest bride,
The cynosure of love and beauty here,
Who shrines heaven's graces in earth's richest casket.

Eliz. I come. (*aside*) Here, Guta, take those monks a
fee—
Tell them I thank them—bid them pray for me.
I am half mazed with trembling joy within,
And noisy wassail round. 'Tis well, for else
The spectre of my duties and my dangers
Would whelm my heart with terror. Ah ! poor self !
Thou took'st this for the term and bourne of troubles—
And now 'tis here, thou findest it the gate
Of new sin-cursed infinities of labor,

Where thou must do, or die !

(*aloud*) Lead on. I'll follow. [*Exeunt.*

Fool. There, now. No fee for the fool ; and yet my perscription was as good as those old Jeremies'. But in law, physic, and divinity, folks had sooner be poisoned in Latin, than saved in the mother-tongue.

ACT II

SCENE I. A. D. 1221-27.

ELIZABETH'S *Bower. Night. LEWIS sleeping in an Alcove.*
ELIZABETH *lying on the Floor in the Foreground.*

Eliz. No streak yet in the blank and eyeless east—
More weary hours to ache, and smart, and shiver
On these bare boards, within a step of bliss.
Why peevish? 'Tis mine own will keeps me here—
And yet I hate myself for that same will :
Fightings within and out ! How easy 'twere, now,
Just to be like the rest, and let life run—
'To use up to the rind what joys God sends us,
Not thus forestall His rod : What ! and so lose
The strength which comes by suffering ? Well, if grief
Be gain, mine's double—fleeing thus the snare
Of yon luxurious and unnerving down,
And widowed from mine Eden. And why widowed ?
Because they tell me, love is of the flesh,
And that's our house-bred foe, the adder in our bosoms,
Which warmed to life, will sting us. They must know—
I do confess mine ignorance, O Lord !
Mine earnest will these painful limbs may prove.

And yet I swore to love him.—So I do
No more than I have sworn. Am I to blame
If God makes wedlock that, which if it be not,
It were a shame for modest lips to speak it,
And silly doves are better mates than we ?
And yet our love is Jesus' due,—and all things
Which share with Him divided empery
Are snares and idols—' To love, to cherish, and to obey !'

O deadly riddle ! Rent and twofold life !
 O cruel troth ! To keep thee or to break thee
 Alike seems sin ! O thou beloved tempter,

[Turning toward the bed.]

Who first didst teach me love, why on thyself
 From God divert thy lesson ? Wilt provoke Him ?
 What if mine heavenly Spouse in jealous ire
 Should smite mine earthly spouse ? Have I two hus-
 bands ?

The words are horror—yet they are orthodox !

[Rises and goes to the window.]

How many many brows of happy lovers
 The fragrant lips of night even now are kissing !
 Some wandering hand in hand through arched lanes ;
 Some listening for loved voices at the lattice ;
 Some steeped in dainty dreams of untried bliss ;
 Some nestling soft and deep in well-known arms,
 Whose touch makes sleep rich life. The very birds
 Within their nests are wooing ! So much love !
 All seek their mates, or finding, rest in peace ;
 The earth seems one vast bride-bed. Doth God tempt
 us ?

Is't all a veil to blind our eyes from him ?
 A fire-fly at the candle. 'Tis love leads him ;
 Love's light, and light is love : O Eden ! Eden !
 Eve was a virgin there, they say ; God knows.
 Must all this be as it had never been ?
 Is it all a fleeting type of higher love ?
 Why, if the lesson's pure, is not the teacher
 Pure also ? Is it my shame to feel no shame ?
 Am I more clean, the more I scent uncleanness ?
 Shall base emotions picture Christ's embrace ?
 Rest, rest, torn heart ! Yet where ? in earth or heaven ?
 Still, from out the bright abysses, gleams our Lady's sil-
 ver footstool,
 Still the light-world sleeps beyond her, though the night-
 clouds fleet below.
 Oh that I were walking, far above, upon that dappled
 pavement,
 Heaven's floor, which is the ceiling of the dungeon where
 we lie.

Ah, what blessed saints might meet me, on that platform,
sliding silent,
Past us in its airy travels, angel-wafted, mystical !
They perhaps might tell me all things, opening up the
secret fountains
Which now struggle, dark and turbid, through their
dreary prison clay.
Love ! art thou an earth-born streamlet, that thou seek'st
the lowest hollows ?
Sure some vapors float up from thee, mingling with the
highest blue.
Spirit-love in spirit-bodies, melted into one existence—
Joining praises through the ages—Is it all a minstrel's
dream ?

Alas ! he wakes.

[LEWIS rises.

Lewis. Ah ! faithless beauty,
Is this your promise, that whene'er you prayed
I should be still the partner of your vigils,
And learn from you to pray ? Last night I lay dissem-
bling

When she who woke you, took my feet for yours :
Now I shall seize my lawful prize perforce.
Alas ! what's this ? These shoulders' cushioned ice,
And thin soft flanks, with purple lashes all,
And weeping furrows traced ! Ah ! precious life-blood !
Who has done this ?

Eliz. Forgive ! 'twas I—my maidens—

Lewis. O ruthless hags !

Eliz. Not so, not so—They wept

When I did bid them, as I bid thee now,
To think of nought but love.

Lewis. Elizabeth !

Speak ! I will know the meaning of this madness !

Eliz. Beloved, thou hast heard how godly souls,
In every age, have tamed the rebel flesh
By such sharp lessons. I must tread their paths,
If I would climb the mountains where they rest.
Grief is the gate of bliss—why wedlock—knighthood—
A mother's joy—a hard-earned field of glory—
By tribulation come—so doth God's kingdom.

Lewis. But doleful nights, and self-inflicted tortures—
Are these the love of God ? Is he well pleased

With this stern holocaust of health and joy ?

Eliz. What ! Am I not as gay a lady-love
As ever clipt in arms a noble knight ?
Am I not blithe as bird the live-long day ?
It pleases me to bear what you call pain,
Therefore to me 'tis pleasure : joy and grief
Are the will's creatures ; martyrs kiss the stake—
The moorland colt enjoys the thorny furze—
The dullest boor will seek a fight, and count
His pleasure by his wounds ; you must forget, love,
Eve's curse lays suffering, as their natural lot,
On womankind, till custom makes it light.
I know the use of pain : bar not the leech
Because his cure is bitter—'Tis such medicine
Which breeds that paltry strength, that weak devotion,
For which you say you love me.—Ay, which brings
Even when most sharp, a stern and awful joy
As its attendant angel—I'll say no more—
Not even to thee—command, and I'll obey thee.

Lewis. Thou casket of all graces ! fourfold wonder
Of wit and beauty, love and wisdom ! Canst thou
Beatify the ascetic's savagery
To heavenly prudence ? Horror melts to pity,
And pity kindles to adoring shower
Of radiant tears ! Thou tender cruelty !
Gay smiling martyrdom ! Shall I forbid thee ?
Limit thy depth by mine own shallowness ?
Thy courage by my weakness ? Where thou darest,
I'll shudder and submit. I kneel here spell-bound
Before my bleeding Saviour's living likeness
To worship, not to cavil : I had dreamt of such things,
Dim heard in legends, while my pitiful blood
Tingled through every vein, and wept, and swore
'Twas beautiful, 'twas Christ-like—had I thought
That thou wert such :—

Eliz. You would have loved me still !

Lewis. I have gone mad, I think, at every parting
At mine own terrors for thee. No ; I'll learn to glory
In that which makes thee glorious ! Noble stains !
I'll call them rose leaves out of paradise
Strewn on the wreathed snows, or rubies dropped
From martyrs' diadems, prints of Jesus' cross

Too truly borne, alas !

Eliz. I think, mine own,
I am forgiven at last ?

Lewis. To-night, my sister—
Henceforth I'll clasp thee to my heart so fast
Thou shalt not 'scape unnoticed.

Eliz. (*laughing*) We shall see—
Now I must stop those wise lips with a kiss,
And lead thee back to scenes of simpler bliss.

SCENE II

A Chamber in the Castle. ELIZABETH—the Fool—
ISENTRUDIS—GUTA *singing*.

High among the lonely hills,
While I lay beside my sheep,
Rest came down and filled my soul,
From the everlasting deep.

Changeless march the stars above,
Changeless morn succeeds to even ;
Still the everlasting hills,
Changeless watch the changeless heaven.

See the rivers, how they run,
Changeless toward the changeless sea ;
All around is forethought sure,
Fixed will and stern decree.

Can the sailor move the main ?
Will the potter heed the clay ?
Mortal ! where the spirit drives,
Thither must the wheels obey.

Neither ask, nor fret, nor strive :
Where thy path is, thou shalt go.
He who made the streams of time
Wafts thee down to weal or woe.

Eliz. That's a sweet song, and yet it does not chime
With my heart's inner voice. Where had you it, Guta ?
Guta. From a nun who was a shepherdess in her youth

—sadly plagued she was by a cruel stepmother, till she fled to a convent and found rest to her soul.

Fool. No doubt; nothing so pleasant as giving up one's will in one's own way. But she might have learnt all that without taking cold on the hill-tops.

Eliz. Where then, Fool?

Fool. At any market-cross where two or three rogues are together, who have neither grace to mend, nor courage to say 'I did it.' Now you shall see the shepherdess' baby dressed in my cap and bells. [Sings.

When I was a greenhorn and young,
And wanted to be and to do,
I puzzled my brains about choosing my line,
Till I found out the way that things go.

The same piece of clay makes a tile,
A pitcher, a taw, or a brick:
Dan Horace knew life; you may cut out a saint,
Or a bench, from the self-same stick.

The urchin who squalls in a jail,
By circumstance turns out a rogue;
While the castle-bred brat is a senator born,
Or a saint, if religion's in vogue.

We fall on our legs in this world,
Blind kittens, tossed in neck and heels:
'Tis Dame Circumstance licks Nature's cubs into shape,
She's the mill-head, if we are the wheels.

Then why puzzle and fret, plot and dream?
He that's wise will just follow his nose;
Contentedly fish, while he swims with the stream;
'Tis no business of his where it goes.

Eliz. Far too well sung for such a saucy song.
So go.

Fool. Ay, I'll go. Whip the dog out of church, and then rate him for being no Christian. [Exit Fool.

Eliz. Guta, there is sense in that knave's ribaldry;
We must not thus baptize our idleness,
And call it resignation: Which is love?

To do God's will, or merely suffer it?
 I do not love that contemplative life :
 No ! I must headlong into seas of toil,
 Leap forth from self, and spend my soul on others.
 Oh ! contemplation palls upon the spirit,
 Like the chill silence of an autumn sun :
 While action, like the roaring south-west wind,
 Sweeps laden with elixirs, with rich draughts
 Quickening the wombed earth.

Guta.

And yet what bliss,

When dying in the darkness of God's light,
 The soul can pierce these blinding webs of nature,
 And float up to The Nothing, which is all things—
 The ground of being, where self-forgetful silence
 Is emptiness,—emptiness fulness,—fulness God,—
 Till we touch Him, and like a snow-flake, melt
 Upon His light-sphere's keen circumference !

Eliz. Hast thou felt this ?

Guta.

In part.

Eliz.

Oh, happy Guta !

Mine eyes are dim—and what if I mistook
 For God's own self, the phantoms of my brain?
 And who am I, that my own will's intent
 Should put me face to face with the living God?
 I, thus thrust down from the still lakes of thought
 Upon a boiling crater-field of labor.
 No ! He must come to me, not I to Him ;
 If I see God, beloved, I must see Him
 In mine own self :—

Guta.

Thyself ?

Eliz.

Why start, my sister ?

God is revealed in the crucified :
 The crucified must be revealed in me :—
 I must put on His righteousness ; show forth
 His sorrow's glory ; hunger, weep with Him ;
 Writhe with His stripes, and let this aching flesh
 Sink through His fiery baptism into death,
 That I may rise with Him, and in His likeness
 May ceaseless heal the sick, and soothe the sad,
 And give away like Him this flesh and blood
 To feed His lambs—ay—we must die with Him
 To sense—and love—

Guta. To love? What then becomes
Of marriage vows?

Eliz. I know it—so speak not of them.
Oh! that's the flow, the chasm in all my longings,
Which I have spanned with cobweb arguments,
Yet yawns before me still, where'er I turn,
To bar me from perfection; had I given
My virgin all to Christ! I was not worthy!
I could not stand alone!

Guta. Here comes your husband.

Eliz. He comes! my sun! and every thrilling vein
Proclaims my weakness.

LEWIS enters.

Lewis. Good news, my Princess; in the street below
Conrad, the man of God from Marpurg, stands
And from a bourne-stone to the simple folk
Does thunder doctrine, preaching faith, repentance,
And dread of all foul heresies; his eyes
On heaven still set, save when with searching frown
He lours upon the crowd, who round him cower
Like quails beneath the hawk, and gape, and tremble,
Now raised to heaven, now down again to hell.
I stood beside and heard; like any doe's
My heart did rise and fall.

Eliz. Oh, let us hear him!
We too need warning; shame, if we let pass,
Unentertained, God's angels on their way.
Send for him, brother.

Lewis. Let a knight go down
And say to the holy man, the Landgrave Lewis
With humble greetings prays his blessedness
To make these secular walls the spirit's temple
At least to-night.

Eliz. Now go, my ladies, both—
Prepare fit lodgings,—let your courtesies
Retain in our poor courts the man of God.

[*Exeunt.* LEWIS and ELIZABETH are left alone.]

Now hear me, best beloved:—I have marked this man:
And that which hath scared others, draws me towards
him:

He has the graces which I want ; his sternness
I envy for its strength ; his fiery boldness
I call the earnestness which dares not trifle
With life's huge stake ; his coldness but the calm
Of one who long hath found, and keeps unwavering,
Clear purpose still ; he hath the gift which speaks
The deepest things most simply ; in his eye
I dare be happy—weak I dare not be.
With such a guide,—to save this little heart—
The burden of self-rule—Oh—half my work
Were eased, and I could live for thee and thine,
And take no thought of self. Oh, be not jealous,
Mine own, mine idol ! For thy sake I ask it—
I would but be a mate and help more meet
For all thy knightly virtues.

Lewis. 'Tis too true !

I have felt it long ; we stand, two weakling children,
Under too huge a burden, while temptations
Like adders swarm up round : I must be led—
But thou alone shalt lead me.

Eliz. I ? beloved !

This load more ? Strengthen, Lord, the feeble knees !

Lewis. Yes ! thou, my queen, who making thyself once
mine,

Hast made me sevenfold thine ; I own thee guide
Of my devotions, mine ambition's lodestar,
The Saint whose shrine I serve with lance and lute ;
If thou wilt have a ruler, let him be,
Through thee, the ruler of thy slave.

[*Kneels to her.*

Eliz. Oh, kneel not—

But grant my prayer—If we shall find this man,
As well I know him, worthy, let him be
Director of my conscience and my actions
With all but thee—Within love's inner shrine
We shall be still alone—But joy ! here comes
Our embassy, successful.

*Enter CONRAD, with COUNT WALTER, Monks,
Ladies, etc.*

Conrad. Peace to this house.

Eliz.

Hail to your holiness.

Lewis. The odor of your sanctity and might,
With balmy steam and gales of Paradise,
Foretells you hither.

Eliz. Bless us doubly, master,
With holy doctrine, and with holy prayers.

Con. Children, I am the servant of Christ's servants—
And needs must yield to those who may command
By right of creed ; I do accept your bounty—
Not for myself, but for that priceless name,
Whose dread authority and due commission,
Attested by the seal of his vicegerent,
I bear unworthy here ; through my vile lips
Christ and His vicar thank you ; on myself—
And these, my brethren, Christ's adopted poor—
A menial's crust, and some waste nook, or dog-hutch,
Wherein the worthless flesh may nightly hide,
Are best bestowed.

Eliz. You shall be where you will—
Do what you will ; unquestioned, unobserved,
Enjoy, refrain ; silence and solitude,
The better part which such like spirits choose,
We will provide ; only be you our master,
And we your servants, for a few short days :
Oh, blessed days !

Con. Ah, be not hasty, madam ;
Think whom you welcome ; one who has no skill
To wink and speak smooth things ; whom fear of God
Constrains to daily wrath ; who brings, alas !
A sword, not peace : within whose bones the word
Burns like a pent-up fire, and makes him bold
If aught in you or yours shall seem amiss,
To cry aloud and spare not ; let me go—
To pray for you—as I have done long time,
Is sweeter than to chide you.

Eliz. Then your prayers
Shall drive home your rebukes ; for both we need you—
Our snares are many, and our sins are more.
So say not nay—I'll speak with you apart.

[ELIZABETH and CONRAD retire.

Lewis (aside). Well, Walter mine, how like you the good
legate ?

Wal. Walter has seen nought of him but his eye ;
And that don't please him.

Lewis. How so, sir ! that face
Is pure and meek—a calm and thoughtful eye.

Wal. A shallow, stony, steadfast eye ; that looks at neither man nor beast in the face, but at something invisible a yard before him, through you and past you, at a fascination, a ghost of fixed purposes that haunts him, from which neither reason nor pity will turn him. I have seen such an eye in men possessed—with devils or with self : sleek, passionless men, who are too refined to be manly, and measure their grace by their effeminacy ; crooked vermin, who swarm up in pious times, being drowned out of their earthly haunts by the spring-tide of religion ; and so making a gain of godliness, swim upon the first of the flood, till it cast them ashore on the firm beach of wealth and station. I always mistrust those wall-eyed saints.

Lewis. Beware, Sir Count ; your keen and worldly wit
Is good for worldly uses, not to tilt
Withal at holy men and holy things.
He pleases well the spiritual sense
Of my most peerless lady, whose discernment
Is still the touchstone of my grosser fancy :
He is her friend and mine : and you must love him
Even for our sakes alone. (*to a bystander*) A word with
you, sir.

[*In the meantime ELIZABETH and CONRAD are talking together.*]

Eliz. I would be taught—

Con. It seems you claim some knowledge,
By choosing thus your teacher.

Eliz. I would know more—

Con. Go then to the schools—and be no wiser, madam ;
And let God's charge here run to waste, to seek
The bitter fruit of knowledge—hunt the rainbow
O'er hill and dale, while wisdom rusts at home.

Eliz. I would be holy, master—

Con. Be so, then.
God's will stands fair : 'tis thine which fails, if any.

Eliz. I would know how to rule—

Con. Then must thou learn

The needs of subjects, and be ruled thyself.
Sink, if thou longest to rise ; become most small—
The strength which comes by weakness makes thee great.
Eliz. I will.

Lewis. What, still at lessons? Come, my fairest sister,
Usher the holy man unto his lodgings. [*Exeunt.*]

Wal. (alone). So, so, the birds are limed :—Heaven
grant that we do not soon see them stowed in separate
cages. Well, here my prophesying ends. I shall go to
my lands, and see how much the gentlemen my neigh-
bors have stolen off them the last week,—Priests? Frogs
in the king's bed-chamber ! What says the song?

I once had a hound, a right good hound,
A hound both fleet and strong :
He ate at my board, and he slept by my bed,
And ran with me all the day long.
But my wife took a priest, a shaveling priest,
And 'such friendships are carnal,' quoth he.
So my wife and her priest they drugged the poor beast,
And the rat's bane is waiting for me.

SCENE III

The Gateway of a Convent. Night.

Enter CONRAD.

Con. This night she swears obedience to me ! Won-
drous Lord !

How hast Thou opened a path, where my young dreams
May find fulfilment : there are prophecies
Upon her, make me bold. Why comes she not ?
She should be here by now. Strange, how I shrink—
I, who ne'er yet felt fear of man or fiend.
Obedience to my will ! An awful charge !
But yet, to have the training of her sainthood ;
To watch her rise above this wild world's waves
Like floating water-lily, towards heaven's light
Opening its virgin snows, with golden eye
Mirroring the golden sun ; to be her champion,
And war with fiends for her ; that were a 'quest' ;

That were true chivalry ; to bring my Judge
 This jewel for His crown ; this noble soul,
 Worth thousand prudish clods of barren clay,
 Who mope for heaven because earth's grapes are sour—
 Her, full of youth, flushed with the heart's rich first-fruits,
 Tangled in earthly pomp—and earthly love.
 Wife? Saint by her face she should be : with such looks
 The queen of heaven, perchance, slow pacing came
 Adown our sleeping wards, when Dominic
 Sank fainting, drunk with beauty :—she is most fair !
 Pooh ! I know nought of fairness—this I know,
 She calls herself my slave, with such an air
 As speaks her queen, not slave ; that shall be looked to—
 She must be pinioned or she will range abroad
 Upon too bold a wing ; 't will cost her pain—
 But what of that? there are worse things than pain—
 What ! not yet here? I'll in, and there await her
 In prayer before the altar : I have need on't :
 And shall have more before this harvest's ripe.

As CONRAD goes out, ELIZABETH, ISENTRUDIS, and GUTA enter.

Eliz. I saw him just before us : let us onward ;
 We must not seem to loiter.

Isen. Then you promise
 Exact obedience to his sole direction
 Henceforth in every scruple?

Eliz. In all I can,
 And be a wife.

Guta. Is it not a double bondage?
 A husband's will is clog enough. Be sure,
 Though free, I crave more freedom.

Eliz. So do I—
 This servitude shall free me—from myself.
 Therefore I'll swear.

Isen. To what?

Eliz. I know not wholly :
 But this I know, that I shall swear to-night
 To yield my will unto a wiser will ;
 To see God's truth through eyes which, like the eagle's,
 From higher Alps undazzled eye the sun.

Compelled to discipline from which my sloth
Would shrink, unbidden,—to deep devious paths
Which my dull sight would miss, I now can plunge,
And dare life's eddies fearless.

Isen. You will repent it.

Eliz. I do repent, even now. Therefore I'll swear.
And bind myself to that, which once being right,
Will not be less right, when I shrink from it.
No ; if the end be gained—if I be raised
To freer, nobler use, I'll dare, I'll welcome
Him and his means, though they were racks and flames.
Come, ladies, let us in, and to the chapel. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV

A Chamber. GUTA, ISENTRUDIS, and a Lady.

Lady. Doubtless she is most holy—but for wisdom—
Say if 'tis wise to spurn all rules, all censures,
And mountebank it in the public ways
Till she becomes a jest?

Isen. How's this?

Lady. For one thing—

Yestreen I passed her in the open street,
Following the vocal line of chanting priests,
Clad in rough serge, and with her soft bare feet
Wooing the ruthless flints ; the gaping crowd
Unknowing whom they held, did thrust and jostle
Her tender limbs ; she saw me as she passed—
And blushed and veiled her face, and smiled withal.

Isen. Oh, think, she's not seventeen yet.

Guta. Why expect

Wisdom with love in all? Each has his gift—
Our souls are organ pipes of diverse stop
And various pitch ; each with its proper notes
Thrilling beneath the self-same breath of God.
Though poor alone, yet joined, they're harmony.
Besides these higher spirits must not bend
To common methods ; in their inner world
They move by broader laws, at whose expression
We must adore, not cavil : here she comes—
The ministering Saint, fresh from the poor of Christ.

ELIZABETH *enters without cloak or shoes, carrying an empty basket.*

Isen. What's here, my Princess? Guta, fetch her robes! Rest, rest, my child!

Eliz. (throwing herself on a seat). Oh! I have seen such things!

I shudder still; your gay looks dazzle me;
As those who long in hideous darkness pent
Blink at the daily light; this room's too bright!
We sit in a cloud, and sing, like pictured angels,
And say, the world runs smooth—while right below
Welters the black fermenting heap of life
On which our state is built: I saw this day
What we might be, and still be Christian women:
And mothers too—I saw one, laid in childbed
These three cold weeks upon the black damp straw;
No nurses, cordials, or that nice parade
With which we try to balk the curse of Eve—
And yet she laughed, and showed her buxom boy,
And said, Another week, so please the Saints,
She'd be at work a-field. Look here—and here—

[pointing round the room.]

I saw no such things there; and yet they lived.
Our wanton accidents take root, and grow
To vaunt themselves God's laws, until our clothes,
Our gems, and gaudy books, and cushioned litters
Become ourselves, and we would fain forget
There live who need them not. *[GUTA offers to robe her.]*

Let be, beloved—

I will taste somewhat this same poverty—
Try these temptations, grudges, gnawing shames,
For which 'tis blamed; how probe an unfelt evil?
Would'st be the poor man's friend? Must freeze with
him—

Test sleepless hunger—let thy crippled back
Ache o'er the endless furrow; how was He,
The blessed One, made perfect? Why, by grief—
The fellowship of voluntary grief—
He read the tear-stained book of poor men's souls,
As I must learn to read it. Lady! lady!

Wear but one robe the less—forego one meal—
And thou shalt taste the core of many tales
Which now flit past thee, like a minstrel's songs,
The sweeter for their sadness.

Lady. Heavenly wisdom!

Forgive me!

Eliz. How? What wrong is mine, fair dame?

Lady. I thought you, to my shame—less wise than holy.
But you have conquered: I will test these sorrows
On mine own person; I have toyed too long
In painted pinnace down the stream of life,
Witched with the landscape, while the weary rowers
Faint at the groaning oar: I'll be thy pupil.
Farewell. Heaven bless thy labors and thy lesson.

[*Exit*

Isen. We are alone. Now tell me, dearest lady,
How came you in this plight?

Eliz. Oh! chide not, nurse—

My heart is full—and yet I went not far—
Even here, close by, where my own bower looks down
Upon that unknown sea of wavy roofs,
I turned into an alley 'neath the wall—
And stepped from earth to hell.—The light of heaven,
The common air, was narrow, gross, and dun;
The tiles did drop from the eaves; the unhinged doors
Tottered o'er inky pools, where reeked and curdled
The offal of a life; the gaunt-haunched swine
Growled at their christened playmates o'er the scraps.
Shrill mothers cursed; wan children wailed; sharp coughs
Rang through the crazy chambers; hungry eyes
Glared dumb reproach, and old perplexity,
Too stale for words; o'er still and webless looms
The listless craftsmen through their elf-locks scowled;
These were my people! all I had I gave—
They snatched it thankless (was it not their own?
Wrung from their veins, returning all too late?);
Or in the new delight of rare possession,
Forgot the giver; one did sit apart,
And shivered on a stone; beneath her rags
Nestled two impish, fleshless, leering boys,
Grown old before their youth; they cried for bread—
She chid them down, and hid her face and wept;

I had given all—I took my cloak, my shoes
(What could I else? 'Twas but a moment's want
Which she had borne, and borne, day after day),
And clothed her bare gaunt arms and purpled feet,
Then slunk ashamed away to wealth and honor.

CONRAD *enters.*

What! Conrad? unannounced! This is too bold!
Peace! I have lent myself—and I must take
The usury of that loan: your pleasure, master?

Con. Madam, but yesterday, I bade your presence,
To hear the preached word of God; I preached—
And yet you came not.—Where is now your oath?
Where is the right to bid, you gave to me?
Am I your ghostly guide? I asked it not.
Of your own will you tendered that, which, given,
Became not choice, but duty.—What is here?
Think not that alms, or lowly-seeming garments,
Self-willed humilities, pride's decent mummers,
Can raise above obedience; she from God
Her sanction draws, while these we forge ourselves,
Mere tools to clear her necessary path.
Go free—thou art no slave: God doth not own
Unwilling service, and His ministers
Must lure, not drag in leash; henceforth I leave thee:
Riot in thy self-willed fancies; pick thy steps
By thine own will-o'-the-wisp toward the pit;
Farewell, proud girl. [*Exit* CONRAD.]

Eliz. O God! What have I done?
I have cast off the clue of this world's maze,
And, like an idiot, let my boat adrift
Above the waterfall!—I had no message—
How's this?

Isen. We passed it by, as matter of no moment
Upon the sudden coming of your guests.

Eliz. No moment! 'Tis enough to have driven him
forth—

And that's enough to damn me: I'll not chide you—
I can see nothing but my loss; I'll to him—
I'll go in sackcloth, bathe his feet with tears—
And know nor sleep nor food till I am forgiven—
And you must with me, ladies. Come and find him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V

A Hall in the Castle. In the background a Group of diseased and deformed Beggars ; CONRAD entering, ELIZABETH comes forward to meet him.

Con. What dost thou, daughter ?

Eliz. Ah, my honored master !

That name speaks pardon, sure.

Con. What dost thou, daughter ?

Eliz. I have been washing these poor people's feet.

Con. A wise humiliation.

Eliz. So I meant it—

And use it as a penance for my pride ;

And yet, alas, through my own vulgar likings

Or stubborn self-conceit, 'tis none to me.

I marvel how the Saints thus tamed their spirits :

Sure to be humbled by such toil, but proves,

Not cures, our lofty mind.

Con. Thou speakest well—

The knave who serves unto another's needs

Knows himself abler than the man who needs him ;

And she who stoops, will not forget, that stooping

Implies a height to stoop from.

Eliz. Could I see

My Saviour in His poor !

Con. Thou shalt hereafter :

But now to wash Christ's feet were dangerous honor

For weakling grace ; would you be humble, daughter,

You must look up, not down, and see yourself

A paltry atom, sap-transmitting vein

Of Christ's vast vine ; the pettiest joint and member

Of His great body ; own no strength, no will,

Save that which from the ruling head's command

Through me, as nerve, derives ; let thyself die—

And dying, rise again to fuller life.

To be a whole is to be small and weak—

To be a part is to be great and mighty

In the one spirit of the mighty whole—

The spirit of the martyrs and the saints—

The spirit of the queen, on whose towered neck

We hang, blest ringlets !

Eliz. Why ! thine eyes flash fire !

Con. But hush ! such words are not for courts and halls—

Alone with God and me, thou shalt hear more.

[*Exit* CONRAD.]

Eliz. As when rich chanting ceases suddenly—
And the rapt sense collapses !—Oh that Lewis
Could feed my soul thus ! But to work—to work—
What wilt thou, little maid ? Ah, I forgot thee—
Thy mother lies in childbed—Say, in time
I'll bring the baby to the font myself.
It knits them unto me, and me to them,
That bond of sponsorship—How now, good dame—
Whence then so sad ?

Woman. An't please your nobleness,
My neighbor Gretl is with her husband laid
In burning fever.

Eliz. I will come to them.

Woman. Alack, the place is foul for such as you ;
And fear of plague has cleared the lane of lodgers ;
If you could send——

Eliz. What ? where I am afraid.
To go myself, send others ? That's strange doctrine.
I'll be with you anon. [*Goes up into the Hall.*]

ISENTRUDIS enters with a basket.

Isen. Why, here's a weight—these cordials now, and
simples,
Want a stout page to bear them : yet her fancy
Is still to go alone, to help herself—
Where will 't all end ? In madness, or the grave ?
No limbs can stand these drudgeries : no spirit
The fretting harrow which this ruffian priest
Calls education—
Ah ! here comes our Count.

[*COUNT WALTER enters as from a journey.*]

Too late, sir, and too seldom—Where have you been
These four months past, while we are sold for bond-slaves
Unto a peevish friar ?

Wal. Why, my fair rosebud—
A trifle overblown, but not less sweet—
I have been pining for you, till my hair
Is as gray as any badger's.

Isen. I'll not jest.

Wal. What? has my wall-eyed Saint shown you his temper?

Isen. The first of his peevish fancies was, that she should eat nothing that was not honestly and peaceably come by.

Wal. Why, I heard that you too had joined that sect.

Isen. And more fool I. But ladies are bound to set an example—while they are not bound to ask where everything comes from : with her, poor child, scruples and starvation were her daily diet ; meal after meal she rose from table empty, unless the Landgrave nodded and winked her to some lawful eatable ; till she that used to take her food like an angel, without knowing it, was thinking from morning to night whether she might eat this, that, or the other.

Wal. Poor Eves ! if the world leaves you innocent, the Church will not. Between the devil and the director, you are sure to get your share of the apples of knowledge.

Isen. True enough. She complained to Conrad of her scruples, and he told her, that by the law was the knowledge of sin.

Wal. But what said Lewis?

Isen. As much bewitched as she, sir. He has told her, and more than her, that were it not for the laughter and ill-will of his barons, he would join her in the same abstinence. But all this is child's play to the friar's last outbreak.

Wal. Ah ! the sermon which you all forgot, when the Marchioness of Misnia came suddenly ? I heard that war had been proclaimed on that score ; but what terms of peace were concluded ?

Isen. Terms of peace ! Do you call it peace to be delivered over to his nuns' tender mercies, myself and Guta, as well as our lady,—as if we had been bond-slaves and blackamoors ?

Wal. You need not have submitted.

Isen. What ! could I bear to see my poor child wander—

ing up and down, wringing her hands like a mad woman—I who have lived for no one else these sixteen years? Guta talked sentiment—called it a glorious cross, and so forth.—I took it as it came.

Wal. And got no quarter, I'll warrant.

Isen. Don't talk of it—my poor back tingles at the thought.

Wal. The sweet Saints think every woman of the world no better than she should be; and without meaning to be envious, owe you all a grudge for past flirtations. As I am a knight, now it's over, I like you all the better for it.

Isen. What?

Wal. When I see a woman who will stand by her word, and two who will stand by their mistress. And the monk, too—there's mettle in him. I took him for a canting carpet-haunter; but be sure, the man who will bully his own patrons has an honest purpose in him, though it bears strange fruit on this wicked hither-side of the grave. Now, my fair nymph of the birchen-tree, use your interest to find me supper and lodging; for your elegant squires of the trencher look surly on me here: I am the prophet who has no honor in his own country. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI

Dawn. A rocky path leading to a mountain Chapel. A Peasant sitting on a stone with dog and cross-bow.

Peasant (singing).

Over the wild moor, in reddest dawn of morning,
Gayly the huntsman down green droves must roam:
Over the wild moor, in grayest wane of evening,
Weary the huntsman comes wandering home;

Home, home.

If he has one. Who comes here?

[*A Woodcutter enters with a laden-ass.*]

What art going about?

Woodcutter. To warm other folks backs.

Peas. Thou art in the common lot—Jack earns and Gill

spends—therein lies the true division of labor. What's thy name?

Woodc. Be'est a keeper, man, or a charmer, that dost so catechise me?

Peas. Both—I am a keeper, for I keep all I catch; and a charmer, for I drive bad spirits out of honest men's turnips.

Woodc. Mary sain us, what be they like?

Peas. Four-legged kitchens of leather, cooking farmers' crops into butcher's meat by night, without leave or license.

Woodc. By token, thou'rt a deer-stealer?

Peas. Stealer, quoth he? I have dominion. I do what I like with mine own.

Woodc. Thine own?

Peas. Yea, marry—for, saith the priest, man has dominion over the beast of the field and the fowl of the air: so I, being as I am a man, as men go, have dominion over the deer in my trade, as you have in yours over sleep-mice and woodpeckers.

Woodc. Then every man has a right to be a poacher.

Peas. Every man has his gift, and the tools go to him that can use them. Some are born workmen; some have souls above work. I'm one of that metal. I was meant to own land, and do nothing; but the angel that deals out babies' souls, mistook the cradles, and spoilt a gallant gentleman! Well—I forgive him! there were many born the same night—and work wears the wits.

Woodc. I had sooner draw in a yoke than hunt in a halter. Hadst best repent and mend thy ways.

Peas. The way-warden may do that: I wear out no ways, I go across country. Mend! saith he? Why I can but starve at worst, or groan with the rheumatism, which you do already. And who would reek and wallow o' nights in the same straw, like a stalled cow, when he may have his choice of all the clean holly bushes in the forest? Who would grub out his life in the same croft, when he has free-warren of all fields between this and Rhine? Not I. I have dirtied my share of spades myself; but I slipped my leash and went self-hunting.

Woodc. But what if thou be caught and brought up before the Prince?

Peas. He don't care for game. He has put down his kennel, and keeps a tame saint instead : and when I am driven in, I shall ask my pardon of her in St. John's name. They say that for his sake she'll give away the shoes off her feet.

Woodc. I would not stand in your shoes for all the top and lop in the forest. Murder! Here comes a ghost! Run up the bank—shove the jackass into the ditch.

[*A white figure comes up the path with lights.*]

Peas. A ghost or a watchman, and one's as bad as the other—so we may take to cover for the time.

ELIZABETH enters, meanly clad, carrying her new-born infant ; ISENTRUDIS following with a taper and gold pieces on a salver. ELIZABETH passes, singing.

Deep in the warm vale the village is sleeping,
Sleeping the firs on the bleak rock above ;
Nought wakes, save grateful hearts, silently creeping
Up to the Lord in the might of their love.

What Thou hast given to me, Lord, here I bring Thee,
Odor, and light, and the magic of gold ,
Feet which must follow Thee, lips which must sing Thee,
Limbs which must ache for Thee ere they grow old.

What Thou hast given to me, Lord, here I tender,
Life of my own life, the fruit of my love ;
Take him, yet leave him me, till I shall render
Count of the precious charge, kneeling above.

[*They pass up the path. The Peasants come out.*]

Peas. No ghost, but a mighty pretty wench, with a mighty sweet voice.

Woodc. Wench, indeed? Where be thy manners? 'Tis her Ladyship—the Princess.

Peas. The Princess! Ay, I thought those little white feet were but lately out of broadcloth—still, I say, a mighty sweet voice—I wish she had not sung so sweetly—it makes things to arise in a body's head, does that singing : a wonderful handsome lady! a royal lady!

Woodc. But a most unwise one. Did ye mind the gold? If I had such a trencherful, it should sleep warm in a stocking, instead of being made a brother to owls here, for every rogue to snatch at.

Peas. Why, then? who dare harm such as her, man?

Woodc. Nay, nay, none of us, we are poor folks, we fear God and the king. But if she had met a gentleman now—heaven help her! Ah! thou hast lost a chance—thou might'st have run out promiscuously, and down on thy knees, and begged thy pardon for the newcomer's sake. There was a chance, indeed.

Peas. Pooh, man, I have done nothing but lose chances all my days. I fell into the fire the day I was christened, and ever since I am like a fresh-trimmed fir-tree; every foul feather sticks to me.

Woodc. Go, shrive thyself, and the priest will scrub off thy turpentine with a new haircloth; and now, good-day, the maids are a-waiting for their firewood.

Peas. A word before you go—Take warning by me—avoid that same serpent, wisdom—Pray to the Saints to make you a blockhead—Never send your boys to school—For Heaven knows, a poor man that will live honest, and die in his bed, ought to have no more scholarship than a parson, and no more brains than your jackass.

SCENE VII

The Gateway of a Castle. ELIZABETH and her suite standing at the top of a flight of steps. Mob below.

Peas. Bread! Bread! Bread! give us bread; we perish.

1st Voice. Ay, give, give, give! God knows, we're long past earning.

2d Voice. Our skeleton children lie along in the roads—

3d Voice. Our sheep drop dead about the frozen leas—

4th Voice. Our harness and our shoes are boiled for food—

Old Man's Voice. Starved, withered, autumn hay that thanks the scythe!

Send out your swordsmen, mow the dry bents down,
And make this long death short—we'll never struggle.

All. Bread! Bread!

Eliz. Ay, bread—Where is it, knights and servants?
Why butler, seneschal, this food forthcomes not!

Butler. Alas, we've eaten all ourselves : heaven knows
The pages broke the buttery hatches down—
The boys were starved almost.

Voice below. Ay, she can find enough to feast her
minions.

Woman's Voice. How can she know what 'tis, for
months and months
To stoop and straddle in the clogging fallows,
Bearing about a living babe within you?
And then at night to fat yourself and it
On fir-bark, madam, and water.

Eliz. My good dame—
That which you bear, I bear : for food, God knows,
I have not tasted food this live-long day—
Nor will till you are served. I sent for wheat
From Koln and from the Rhine-land, days ago :
O God ! why comes it not?

Enter from below, COUNT WALTER, with a Merchant.

Wal. Stand back ; you'll choke me, rascals :
Archers, bring up those mules. Here comes the corn—
Here comes your guardian angel, plenty-laden,
With no white wings, but good white wheat, my boys,
Quarters on quarters—if you'll pay for it.

Eliz. Oh ! give him all he asks.

Wal. The scoundrel wants
Three times its value.

Merchant. Not a penny less—
I bought it on speculation—I must live—
I get my bread by buying corn that's cheap,
And selling where 'tis dearest. Mass, you need it,
And you must pay according to your need.

Mob. Hang him ! hang all regraters—hang the fore-
stalling dog !

Wal. Driver, lend here the halter off that mule.

Eliz. Nay, Count ; the corn is his, and his the right
To fix conditions for his own.

Mer. Well spoken !
A wise and royal lady ! She will see

The trade protected. Why, I kept the corn
 Three months on venture. Now, so help me Saints,
 I am a loser by it, quite a loser—
 So help me Saints, I am.

Eliz. You will not sell it
 Save at a price which, by the bill you tender,
 Is far beyond our means. Heaven knows, I grudge
 not—

I have sold my plate, have pawned my robes and jewels.
 Mortgaged broad lands and castles to buy food—
 And now I have no more.—Abate, or trust
 Our honor for the difference.

Mer. Not a penny—
 I trust no nobles. I must make my profit—
 I'll have my price, or take it back again.

Eliz. Most miserable, cold, short-sighted man,
 Who for thy selfish gains dost welcome make
 God's wrath, and battenest on thy fellows' woes,
 What? wilt thou turn from heaven's gate, open to thee.
 Through which thy charity may passport be,
 And win thy long greed's pardon? Oh, for once
 Dare to be great; show mercy to thyself!
 See how that boiling sea of human heads
 Waits open-mouthed to bless thee: speak the word,
 And their triumphant quire of jubilation
 Shall pierce God's cloudy floor with praise and prayers,
 And drown the accuser's count in angels' ears.

[*In the meantime WALTER, etc., have been throwing down
 the wheat to the Mob.*]

Mob. God bless the good Count!—Bless the holy Princess—
 Hurrah for wheat—Hurrah for one full stomach.

Mer. Ah! that's my wheat! treason, my wheat, my money!

Eliz. Where is the wretch's wheat?

Wal. Below, my lady;
 We counted on the charm of your sweet words,
 And so did for him what, your sermon ended,
 He would have done himself.

Knight. 'Twere rude to doubt it.

Mer. Ye rascal barons !
What ! Are we burghers monkeys for your pastime ?
We'll clear the odds. [*Seizes WALTER.*]

Wal. Soft, friend—a worm will turn.

Voices below. Throw him down.

Wal. Dost hear that, friend ?
Those pups are keen-toothed ; they have eat of late
Worse bacon to their bread than thee. Come, come,
Put up thy knife ; we'll give thee market-price—
And if thou must have more—why, take it out
In board and lodging in the castle dungeon.

[*WALTER leads him out ; the Mob, etc., disperse.*]

Eliz. Now then—there's many a one lies faint at home
—I'll go to them myself.

Isen. What now ? start forth
In this most bitter frost, so thinly clad ?

Eliz. Tut, tut, I wear my working dress to-day,
And those who work, robe lightly—

Isen. Nay, my child,
For once keep your rank.

Eliz. Then I had best
Roll to their door in lacquyed equipage,
And dole my halfpence from my satin purse—
I am their sister—I must look like one.
I am their queen—I'll prove myself the greatest
By being the minister of all. So come—
Now to my pastime. (*aside*) And in happy toil
Forget this whirl of doubt—We are weak, we are weak,
Only when still : put thou thine hand to the plough,
The spirit drives thee on.

Isen. You live too fast !

Eliz. Too fast ? We live too slow—our gummy blood
Without fresh purging airs from heaven, would choke
Slower and slower, till it stopped and froze.
God ! fight we not within a cursed world,
Whose very air teems thick with leagued fiends—
Each word we speak has infinite effects—
Each soul we pass must go to heaven or hell—
And this our one chance through eternity
To drop and die, like dead leaves in the brake,

Or like the meteor stone, though whelmed itself,
 Kindled the dry moors into fruitful blaze—
 And yet we live too fast !
 Be earnest, earnest, earnest ; mad, if thou wilt :
 Do what thou dost as if the stake were heaven,
 And that thy last deed ere the judgment-day.
 When all's done, nothing's done. There's rest above—
 Below let work be death, if work be love ! [Exeunt.

SCENE VIII

*A Chamber in the Castle. Counts WALTER, HUGO, etc.,
 Abbot, and Knights.*

Count Hugo. I can't forget it, as I am a Christian man.
 To ask for a stoup of beer at breakfast, and be told there
 was no beer allowed in the house—her Ladyship had
 given all the malt to the poor.

Abbot. To give away the staff of life, eh ?

C. Hugo. The life itself, Sir, the life itself. All that
 barley, that would have warmed many an honest fellow's
 coppers, wasted in filthy cakes.

Abbot. The parent of seraphic ale degraded into plebeian
 dough ! Indeed, Sir, we have no right to lessen wantonly
 the amount of human enjoyment !

C. Wal. In heaven's name, what would you have her
 do, while the people were eating grass ?

C. Hugo. Nobody asked them to eat it ; nobody asked
 them to be there to eat it ; if they will breed like rabbits,
 let them feed like rabbits, say I—I never married till I
 could keep a wife.

Abbot. Ah, Count Walter ! How sad to see a man of
 your sense so led away by his feelings ! Had but this
 dispensation been left to work itself out, and evolved the
 blessing implicit in all heaven's chastenings ! Had but
 the stern benevolences of providence remained undisturbed
 by her ladyship's carnal tenderness—what a boon
 had this famine been !

C. Wal. How then, man ?

Abbot. How many a poor soul would be lying—Ah,
 blessed thought !—in Abraham's bosom ; who must now
 toil on still in this vale of tears !—Pardon this pathetic
 dew—I cannot but feel as a Churchman,

3d Count. Look at it in this way, Sir. There are too many of us—too many—Where you have one job you have three workmen. Why, I threw three hundred acres into pasture myself this year—it saves money, and risk, and trouble, and tithes.

C. Wal. What would you say to the Princess, who talks of breaking up all her parks to wheat next year?

3d Count. Ask her to take on the thirty families, who were just going to tramp off those three hundred acres into the Rhine-land, if she had not kept them in both senses this winter, and left them on my hands—once beggars, always beggars.

C. Hugo. Well, I'm a practical man, and I say, the sharper the famine, the higher are prices, and the higher I sell, the more I can spend; so the money circulates, Sir, that's the word—like water—sure to run downwards again; and so it's as broad as it's long; and here's a health—if there was any beer—to the farmers' friends, 'A bloody war and a wet harvest.'

Abbot. Strongly put, though correctly. For the self-interest of each it is which produces in the aggregate the happy equilibrium of all.

C. Wal. Well—the world is right well made, that's certain; and He who made the Jews' sin our salvation may bring plenty out of famine, and comfort out of covetousness. But look you, Sirs, private selfishness may be public weal, and yet private selfishness be just as surely damned, for all that.

3d Count. I hold, Sir, that every alms is a fresh badge of slavery.

C. Wal. I don't deny it.

3d Count. Then teach them independence.

C. Wal. How? By tempting them to turn thieves, when begging fails? By keeping their stomachs just at desperation-point? By starving them out here, to march off, starving all the way, to some town, in search of employment, of which, if they find it, they know no more than my horse? Likely! No, Sir, to make men of them, put them not out of the reach, but out of the need, of charity.

3d Count. And how, prithee? By teaching them, like our fair Landgravine, to open their mouth for all that

drops? Thuringia is become a kennel of beggars in her hands.

C. Wal. In hers? In ours, Sir!

Abbot. Idleness, Sir, deceit, and immorality are the three children of this same barbarous self-indulgence in almsgiving. Leave the poor alone. Let want teach them the need of self-exertion, and misery prove the foolishness of crime.

C. Wal. How? Teach them to become men by leaving them brutes?

Abbot. Oh, Sir, there we step in, with the consolations and instructions of the faith.

C. Wal. Ay, but while the grass is growing the steed is starving; and in the meantime, how will the callow chick Grace stand against the tough old game-cock Hunger?

3d Count. Then how, in the name of patience, would you have us alter things?

C. Wal. We cannot alter them, Sir—but they will be altered, never fear.

Omnes. How? How?

C. Wal. Do you see this hour-glass?—Here's the state: This air stands for the idlers;—this sand for the workers. When all the sand has run to the bottom, God in heaven just turns the hour-glass, and then—

C. Hugo. The world's upside down.

C. Wal. And the Lord have mercy upon us!

Omnes. On us? Do you call us the idlers?

C. Wal. Some dare to do so—But fear not—In the fullness of time, all that's lightest is sure to come to the top again.

C. Hugo. But what rascal calls us idlers?

Omnes. Name, name.

C. Wal. Why, if you ask me—I heard a shrewd sermon the other day on that same idleness and immorality text of the Abbot's.—'Twas Conrad, the Princess's director, preached it. And a fashionable cap it is, though it will fit more than will like to wear it. Shall I give it you? Shall I preach?

C. Hugo. A tub for Varila! Stand on the table, now, toss back thy hood like any Franciscan, and preach away.

C. Wal. Idleness, quoth he (Conrad, mind you),—idle-

ness and immorality? Where have they learnt them, but from your nobles? There was a saucy monk for you. But there's worse coming. Religion? said he, how can they respect it, when they see you, 'their betters,' fattening on church lands, neglecting sacraments, defying excommunications trading in benefices, hiring the clergy for your puppets and flatterers, making the ministry, the episcopate itself, a lumber-room wherein to stow away the idiots and spendthrifts of your families, the confidants of your mistresses, the cast-off pedagogues of your boys?

Omnes. The scoundrel!

C. Wal. Was he not?—But hear again—Immorality? roars he; and who has corrupted them but you? Have you not made every castle a weed-bed, from which the newest corruptions of the Court stick like thistle-down, about the empty heads of stable-boys and serving maids? Have you not kept the poor worse housed than your dogs and your horses, worse fed than your pigs and your sheep? Is there an ancient house among you, again, of which village gossips do not whisper some dark story of lust and oppression, of decrepit debauchery, of hereditary doom?

Omnes. We'll hang this monk.

C. Wal. Hear me out, and you'll burn him. His sermon was like a hailstorm, the tail of the shower the sharpest. Idleness? he asked next of us all: how will they work, when they see you landlords sitting idle above them, in a fool's paradise of luxury and riot, never looking down but to squeeze from them an extra drop of honey—like sheep-boys stuffing themselves with blackberries while the sheep are licking up flukes in every ditch? And now you wish to leave the poor man in the slough, whither your neglect and your example have betrayed him, and made his too apt scholarship the excuse for your own remorseless greed! As a Christian, I am ashamed of you all; as a Churchman, doubly ashamed of those prelates, hired stalking-horses of the rich, who would fain gloss over their own sloth and cowardice with the wisdom which cometh not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish; aping the artless cant of an aristocracy who made them—use them—and despise them. That was his sermon.

Abbot. Paul and Barnabas ! What an outpouring of the spirit !—Were not his hoodship the Pope's legate, now—accidents might happen to him, going home at night ; eh, Sir Hugo ?

C. Hugo. If he would but come my way !

For 'the mule it was slow, and the lane it was dark,
When out of the copse leapt a gallant young spark.
Says, 'Tis not for nought you've been begging all day :
So remember your toll, since you travel our way.'

Abbot. Hush ! Here comes the Landgrave.

LEWIS enters.

Lewis. Good morrow, gentles. Why so warm, Count Walter ?

Your blessing, Father Abbot : what deep matters
Have called our worships to this conference ?

C. Hugo (aside). Up, Count ; you are spokesman.

3d Count. Exalted Prince,

Whose peerless knighthood, like the remeant sun,
After too long a night, regilds our clay,
Late silvered by the reflex lunar beams
Of your celestial lady's matron graces—

Abbot (aside). Ut vinum optimum amati mei
Dulciter descendens !

3d Count. Think not we mean to praise or disapprove—
The acts of saintly souls must only plead
In foro conscientiae : grosser minds,
Whose humbler aim is but the public weal,
Know of no mesh which holds them : yet, great Prince,
Some dare not see their sovereign's strength postponed
To private grace, and sigh, that generous hearts,
And ladies' tenderness, too oft forgetting
That wisdom is the highest charity,
Will interfere, in pardonable haste,
With heaven's stern providence.

Lewis.

We see your drift.
Go, sirrah (*to a Page*) ; pray the Princess to illumine
Our conclave with her beauties. 'Tis our manner
To hear no cause, of gentle or of simple,

Unless the accused and the accuser both
Meet face to face

3d Count. Excuse, high-mightiness,—
We bring no accusation ; facts, your Highness,
Wait for your sentence, not our præjudicium.

Lewis. Give us the facts, then, Sir ; in the lady's presence,
Her nearness to ourselves—perchance her reasons—
May make them somewhat dazzling.

Abbot. Nay, my Lord ;
I, as a Churchman, though with these your nobles
Both in commission and opinion one,
Am yet most loth, my Lord, to set my seal
To aught which this harsh world might call complaint
Against a princely saint—a chosen vessel—
An argosy celestial—in whom error
Is but the young luxuriance of her grace.
The Count of Varila, as bound to neither,
For both shall speak, and all which late has passed
Upon the matter of this famine open.

C. Wal. Why, if I must speak out—then I'll confess
To have stood by, and seen the Landgravine
Do most strange deeds ; and in her generation
Show no more wit than other babes of light.
First, she has given away, to starving rascals,
The stores of grain she might have sold, good lack !
For any price she asked ; has pawned your jewels,
And mortgaged sundry farms, and all for food.
Has sunk vast sums in fever-hospitals,
For rogues whom famine sickened—almhouses
For sluts whose husbands died—schools for their brats.
Most sad vagaries ! but there's worse to come.
The dulness of the Court has ruined trade :
The jewellers and clothiers don't come near us ;
The sempstresses, my lord, and pastry cooks
Have quite forgot their craft ; she has turned all heads
And made the ladies starve, and wear old clothes,
And run about with her to nurse the sick,
Instead of putting gold in circulation
By balls, sham-fights, and dinners ; 'tis most sad, sir,
But she has swept your treasury out as clean—
As was the widow's cruse, who fed Elijah.

Lewis. Ruined, no doubt ! Lo ! here the culprit comes

ELIZABETH *enters*.

Come hither, dearest. These, my knights and nobles,
Lament your late unthrift) our conscience speaks
The causes of their blame); and wish you warned,
As wisdom is the highest charity,
No more to interfere, from private feeling,
With heaven's stern laws, or maim the sovereign's wealth,
To save superfluous villains' worthless lives.

Eliz. Lewis!

Lewis. Not I, fair, but my counsellors,
In courtesy, need some reply.

Eliz. My Lords;
Doubtless, you speak as your duty bids you:
I know you love my husband: do you think
My love is less than yours? 'Twas for his honor
I dare not lose a single silly sheep
Of all the flock which God had trusted to him.
True, I had hoped by this—No matter what—
Since to your sense it bears a different hue.
I keep no logic. For my gifts, thank God,
They cannot be recalled; for those poor souls,
My pensioners—even for my husband's knightly name,
Oh! ask not back that slender loan of comfort
My folly has procured them: if, my Lords,
My public censure, or disgraceful penance
May expiate, and yet confirm my waste,
I offer this poor body to the buffets
Of sternest justice: when I dared not spare
My husband's lands, I dare not spare myself.

Lewis. No! no! My noble sister? What? my Lords!
If her love move you not, her wisdom may.
She knows a deeper statecraft, Sirs, than you:
She will not throw away the substance, Abbot,
To save the accident; waste living souls
To keep, or hope to keep, the means of life.
Our wisdom and our swords may fill our coffers,
But will they breed us men, my Lords, or mothers?
God blesses in the camp a noble rashness:
Then why not in the storehouse? He that lends
To Him, need never fear to lose his venture.
Spend on, my Queen. You will not sell my castles?

Nay, you must leave us Neuburg, love, and Wartburg.
Their worn old stones will hardly pay the carriage,
And foreign foes may pay untimely visits.

C. Wal. And home foes, too ; if these philosophers
Put up the curb, my Lord, a half-link tighter,
The scythes will be among our horses' legs
Before next harvest.

Lewis. Fear not for our welfare :
We have a guardian here, well skilled to keep
Peace for our seneschal, while angels, stooping
To catch the tears she sheds for us in absence,
Will sain us from the roaming adversary
With scents of Paradise. Farewell, my Lords.

Eliz. Nay,—I must pray your knighthoods—You must
honor
Our dais and bower as private guests to-day.
Thanks for your gentle warning ; may my weakness
To such a sin be never tempted more !

[*Exeunt ELIZABETH and LEWIS.*]

C. Wal. Thus, as if virtue were not its own reward, is it
paid over and above with beef and ale ? Weep not, tender-
hearted Count ! Though 'generous hearts,' my Lord,
'and ladies' tenderness, too oft forget'—Truly spoken !
Lord Abbot, does not your spiritual eye discern coals of
fire on Count Hugo's head ?

C. Hugo. Where, and a plague ? Where ?

C. Wal. Nay, I speak mystically,—there is nought there
but what beer will quench before nightfall. Here, peep-
ing rabbit (*to a Page at the door*), out of your burrow, and
show these gentles to their lodgings. We will meet at
the gratias. [They go out.]

C. Wal. (alone). Well :—if Hugo is a brute, he at least
makes no secret of it. He is an old boar, and honest ;
he wears his tushes outside, for a warning to all men.
But for the rest !—Whited sepulchres ! and not one of
them but has half persuaded himself of his own benevo-
lence. Of all cruelties, save me from your small pedant,
—your closet philosopher, who has just courage enough
to bestride his theory, without wit to see whither it will
carry him. In experience, a child : in obstinacy, a
woman : in nothing a man, but in logic-chopping : in-
stead of God's grace, a few schoolboy saws about benev-

olence, and industry, and independence—there is his metal. If the world will be mended on his principles, well. If not, poor world!—but principles must be carried out, though through blood and famine: for truly, man was made for theories, not theories for man. A doctrine is these men's God—touch but that shrine, and lo! your simpering philanthropist becomes as ruthless as a Dominican. [Exit

SCENE IX

ELIZABETH'S *Bower.* ELIZABETH and LEWIS *sitting together.*

SONG

Eliz. Oh that we two were Maying
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze;
Like children with violets playing
In the shade of the whispering trees!

Oh that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimmed down
Watching the white mist steaming
Over river and mead and town!

Oh that we two lay sleeping
In our nest in the churchyard sod,
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God!

Lewis. Ah, turn away those swarthy diamonds' blaze!
Mine eyes are dizzy, and my faint sense reels
In the rich fragrance of those purple tresses
Oh, to be thus, and thus, day after day!
To sleep, and wake, and find it yet no dream—
My atmosphere, my hourly food, such bliss
As to have dreamt of, five short years ago,
Had seemed a mad conceit.

Eliz. Five years ago?

Lewis. I know not; for upon our marriage-day
I slipped from time into eternity;
Where each day teems with centuries of life,
And centuries were but one wedding morn.

Eliz. Lewis, I am too happy ! floating higher
Then e'er my will had dared to soar, though able ;
But circumstance, which is the will of God,
Beguiled my cowardice to that, which, darling,
I found most natural, when I feared it most.
Love would have had no strangeness in mine eyes,
Save from the prejudice which others taught me—
They should know best. Yet now this wedlock seems
A second infancy's baptismal robe,
A heaven, my spirit's antenatal home,
Lost in blind pining girlhood—found now, found !
(*Aside*) What have I said ? Do I blaspheme ? Alas !
I neither made these thoughts, nor can unmake them.

Lewis. Ay, marriage is the life-long miracle,
The self-begetting wonder, daily fresh ;
The Eden, where the spirit and the flesh
Are one again, and new-born souls walk free,
And name in mystic language all things new,
Naked, and not ashamed. [*ELIZ. hides her face.*]

Eliz.

O God ! were that true !

[*Clasps him round the neck.*]

There, there, no more—

I love thee, and I love thee, and I love thee—
More than rich thoughts can dream, or mad lips speak ;
But how, or why, whether with soul or body,
I will not know. Thou art mine.—Why question further ?
(*Aside*) Ay if I fall by loving, I will love,
And be degraded !—how ? by my own troth-plight ?
No, but my thinking that I fall.—'Tis written
That whatsoe'er is not of faith is sin.—

O Jesu Lord ! Hast Thou not made me thus ?

Mercy ! My brain will burst : I cannot leave him !

Lewis. Beloved, if I went away to war—

Eliz. O God ! More wars ? More partings ?

Lewis.

Nay, my sister—

My trust but longs to glory in its surety :

What would'st thou do ?

Eliz.

What have I done already.

Have I not followed thee, through drought and frost,
Through flooded swamps, rough glens, and wasted lands,
Even while I panted most with thy dear loan
Of double life ?

Lewis. My saint! but what if I bid thee
To be my seneschal, and here with prayers,
With sober thrift, and noble bounty shine,
Alone and peerless? And suppose—nay, start not—
I only said suppose—the war was long,
Our camps far off, and that some winter, love,
Or two, pent back this Eden stream, where now
Joys upon joys like sunlit ripples pass,
Alike, yet ever new.—What would'st thou do, love?

Eliz. A year? A year! A cold, blank, widowed year!
Strange, that mere words should chill my heart with fear—

This is no hall of doom,
No impious Soldan's feast of old,
Where o'er the madness of the foaming gold,
A fleshless hand its woe on tainted walls enrolled.

Yet by thy wild words raised,
In Love's most careless revel,
Looms through the future's fog a shade of evil,
And all my heart is glazed.—
Alas! What would I do?

I would lie down and weep, and weep,
Till the salt current of my tears should sweep
My soul, like floating weed, adown a fitful sleep,
A lingering half-night through.
Then when the mocking bells did wake
My hollow eyes to twilight gray,
I would address my spiritless limbs to pray,
And nerve myself with stripes to meet the weary day,
And labor for thy sake.

Until by vigils, fasts, and tears,
The flesh was grown so spare and light,
That I could slip its mesh, and flit by night
O'er sleeping sea and land to thee—or Christ—till morning
light.

Peace! Why these fears?
Life is too short for mean anxieties:
Soul! thou must work, though blindfold.

Come, beloved,
I must turn robber.—I have begged of late
So soft, I fear to ask.—Give me thy purse.

Lewis. No, not my purse:—stay—Where is all that gold
I gave you, when the Jews came here from Koln?

Eliz. On, those few coins? I spent them all next day
On a new chapel on the Eisenthal;
There were no choristers but nightingales—
No teachers there save bees: how long is this?
Have you turned niggard?

Lewis. Nay; go ask my steward—
Take what you will—this purse I want myself.

Eliz. Ah! now I guess. You have some trinket for me—

You promised late to buy no more such baubles—
And now you are ashamed.—Nay, I must see—

[*Snatches his purse. LEWIS hides his face.*]

Ah, God! what's here? A new crusader's cross?
Whose? Nay, nay—turn not from me; I guess all—
You need not tell me; it is very well—
According to the meed of my deserts:
Yes—very well.

Lewis. Ah, love!—look not so calm—

Eliz. Fear not—I shall weep soon.

How long is it since you vowed?

Lewis. A week or more.

Eliz. Brave heart! And all that time your tenderness
Kept silence, knowing my weak foolish soul. [*Weeps.*]
O love! O life! Late found, and soon, soon lost!
A bleak sunrise,—a treacherous morning gleam,—
And now, ere mid-day, all my sky is black
With whirling drifts once more! The march is fixed
For this day month, is't not?

Lewis. Alas, too true!

Eliz. Oh break not, heart!

CONRAD enters.

Ah! here my master comes.

No weeping before him.

Lewis. Speak to the holy man:
He can give strength and comfort, which poor I
Need even more than you. Here, saintly master,
I leave her to your holy eloquence. Farewell!
God help us both! [*Exit LEWIS.*]

Eliz. (rising). You know, Sir, that my husband has
taken the cross!

Con. I do; all praise to God!

Eliz. But none to you :
 Hard-hearted ! Am I not enough your slave ?
 Can I obey you more when he is gone
 Than now I do ? Wherein, pray, has he hindered
 This holiness of mine, for which you make me
 Old ere my womanhood ? *[CONRAD offers to go.]*

Stay, Sir, and tell me
 Is this the outcome of your 'father's care' ?
 Was it not enough to poison all my joys
 With foulest scruples ?—show me nameless sins,
 Where I, unconscious babe, blessed God for all things,
 But you must thus intrigue away my knight
 And plunge me down this gulf of widowhood !
 And I not twenty yet—a girl—an orphan—
 That cannot stand alone ! Was I too happy ?
 O God ! what lawful bliss do I not buy.
 And balance with the smart of some sharp penance ?
 Hast thou no pity ? None ? Thou drivest me
 To fiendish doubts : Thou, Jesus' messenger ?

Con. This to your master !

Eliz. This to any one
 Who dares to part me from my love.

Con. 'Tis well—
 In pity to your weakness I must deign
 To do what ne'er I did—excuse myself.
 I say, I knew not of your husband's purpose ;
 God's spirit, not I, moved him : perhaps I sinned
 In that I did not urge it myself.

Eliz. Thou traitor !
 So thou would'st part us ?

Con. Aught that makes thee greater
 I'll dare. This very outburst proves in thee
 Passions unsanctified, and carnal leanings
 Upon the creatures thou would'st fain transcend.
 Thou badest me cure thy weakness. Lo, God brings thee
 The tonic cup I feared to mix :—be brave—
 Drink it to the lees, and thou shalt find within
 A pearl of price.

Eliz. 'Tis bitter !

Con. Bitter, truly :
 Even I, to whom the storm of earthly love
 Is but a dim remembrance—Courage ! Courage !

There's glory in't ; fulfil thy sacrifice ;
 Give up thy noblest on the noblest service
 God's sun has looked on, since the chosen twelve
 Went conquering, and to conquer, forth. If he falls—

Eliz. Oh, spare mine ears !

Con. He falls a blessed martyr,
 To bid thee welcome through the gates of pearl ;
 And next to his shall thine own guerdon be
 If thou devote him willing to thy God.
 Wilt thou ?

Eliz. Have mercy !

Con. Wilt thou ? Sit not thus
 Watching the sightless air ; no angel in it
 But asks thee what I ask : the fiend alone
 Delays thy coward flesh : Wilt thou devote him ?

Eliz. I will devote him ;—a crusader's wife !—
 I'll glory in it. Thou speakest words from God—
 And God shall have him ! Go now—good my master ;
 My poor brain swims. [*Exit CONRAD.*]
 Yes—a crusader's wife !

And a crusader's widow !

[*Bursts into tears, and dashes herself on the floor.*]

SCENE X

*A Street in the Town of Schmalcald. Bodies of Crusading
 Troops defiling past. LEWIS and ELIZABETH with their
 Suite in the foreground.*

Lewis. Alas ! the time is near ; I must be gone—
 There are our liegemen ; how you'll welcome us,
 Returned in triumph, bowed with paynim spoils,
 Beneath the victor cross, to part no more !

Eliz. Yes—we shall part no more, where next we meet.
 Enough to have stood here once on such an errand !

Lewis. The bugle calls.—Farewell, my love, my lady,
 Queen, sister, saint ! One last long kiss—farewell !

Eliz. One kiss—and then another—and another—
 Till 'tis too late to go—and so return—
 O God ! forgive that craven thought ? There, take him
 Since Thou dost need him. I have kept him ever

Thine, when most mine ; and shall I now deny Thee ?
 Oh ! go—yes, go—Thou'll not forget to pray [LEWIS goes.]

With me, at our old hour ? Alas he's gone
 And lost—thank God he hears me not—forever.
 Why look'st thou so, poor girl ? I say, forever.
 The day I found the bitter blessed cross.
 Something did strike my heart like keen cold steel,
 Which quarries daily there with dead dull pains—
 Whereby I know that we shall meet no more.
 Come ! Home, maids, home ! Prepare me widow's weeds—
 For he is dead to me, and I must soon
 Die too to him, and many things ; and mark me—
 Breathe not his name, lest this love-pampered heart
 Should sicken to vain yearnings—Lost ! lost ! lost !

Lady. Oh stay, and watch this pomp.

Eliz. Well said—we'll stay ; so this bright enterprise
 Shall blanch our private clouds, and steep our soul
 Drunk with the spirit of great Christendom.

CRUSADER CHORUS.

[*Men-at-Arms pass, singing.*]

The tomb of God before us,
 Our fatherland behind,
 Our ships shall leap o'er billows steep,
 Before a charmed wind.

Above our van great angels
 Shall fight along the sky ;
 While martyrs pure and crowned saints
 To God for rescue cry.

The red-cross knights and yeomen
 Throughout the holy town,
 In faith and might, on left and right,
 Shall tread the paynim down.

Till on the Mount Moriah
 The Pope of Rome shall stand ;
 The Kaiser and the King of France
 Shall guard him on each hand.

There shall he rule all nations,
With crozier and with sword ;
And pour on all the heathen
The wrath of Christ the Lord.

[*Women—bystanders.*]

Christ is a rock in the bare salt land,
To shelter our knights from the sun and sand :
Christ the Lord is a summer sun,
To ripen the grain while they are gone.

Then you who fight in the bare salt land,
And you who work at home,
Fight and work for Christ the Lord,
Until His kingdom come.

[*Old Knights pass.*]

Our stormy sun is sinking ;
Our sands are running low ;
In one fair fight, before the night,
Our hard-worn hearts shall glow.

We cannot pine in cloister ;
We cannot fast and pray ;
The sword which built our load of guilt
Must wipe that guilt away.

We know the doom before us ;
The dangers of the road ;
Have mercy, mercy, Jesu blest,
When we lie low in blood.

When we lie gashed and gory,
The holy walls within,
Sweet Jesu, think upon our end,
And wipe away our sin.

[*Boy Crusaders pass.*]

The Christ-child sits on high :
He looks through the merry blue sky ;
He holds in his hand a bright lily-band,
For the boys who for him die.

On holy Mary's arm,
Wrapt safe from terror and harm,
Lulled by the breeze in the paradise trees,
Their souls sleep soft and warm.

Knight David, young and true,
The giant Soldan slew,
And our arms so light, for the Christ-child's right,
Like noble deeds can do.

[*Young Knights pass.*]

The rich East blooms fragrant before us ;
All Fairyland beckons us forth ;
We must follow the crane in her flight o'er the main,
From the frosts and the moors of the North.

Our sires in the youth of the nations
Swept westward through plunder and blood,
But a holier quest calls us back to the East,
We fight for the kingdom of God.

Then shrink not, and sigh not, fair ladies,
The red cross which flames on each arm and each shield,
Through philtre and spell, and the black charms of hell,
Shall shelter our true love in camp and in field.

[*Old Monk, looking after them.*]

Jerusalem, Jerusalem !
The burying place of God !
Why gay and bold, in steel and gold,
O'er the paths where Christ hath trod ?

[*The Scene closes.*]

ACT III

SCENE I

A Chamber in the Wartburg. ELIZABETH sitting in Widow's weeds ; GUTA and ISENTRUDIS by her.

Isen. What? Always thus, my Princess? Is this wise,
By day with fasts and ceaseless coil of labor ;
About the ungracious poor—hands, eyes, feet, brain
O'ertasked alike—'mid sin and filth, which make
Each sense a plague—by night with cruel stripes,
And weary watchings on the freezing stone,
To double all your griefs, and burn life's candle,
As village gossips say, at either end?
The good book bids the heavy-hearted drink,
And so forget their woe.

Eliz. 'Tis written too
In that same book, nurse, that the days shall come
When the bridegroom shall be taken away—and then—
Then shall they mourn and fast : I needed weaning
From sense and earthly joys ; by this way only
May I win God to leave in mine own hands
My luxury's cure : oh ! I may bring him back,
By working out to its full depth the chastening
The need of which his loss proves : I but barter
Less grief for greater—pain for widowhood.

Isen. And death for life—your cheeks are wan and
sharp
As any three-days' moon—you are shifting always
Uneasily and stiff, now, on your seat,
As from some secret pain.

Eliz. Why watch me thus ?
You cannot know—and yet you know too much—
I tell you, nurse, pain's comfort, when the flesh
Aches with the aching soul in harmony,
And even in woe, we are one : the heart must speak

Its passion's strangeness in strange symbols out,
Or boil, till it bursts inly.

Guta. Yet, methinks,
You might have made this widowed solitude
A holy rest—a spell of soft gray weather,
Beneath whose fragrant dews all tender thoughts
Might bud and burgeon.

Eliz. That's a gentle dream ;
But nature shows nought like it : every winter,
When the great sun has turned his face away,
The earth goes down into the vale of grief,
And fasts, and weeps, and shrouds herself in sables,
Leaving her wedding-garlands to decay—
Then leaps in spring to his returning kisses—
As I may yet !—

Isen. There, now—my foolish child !
You faint : come—come to your chamber—

Eliz. Oh, forgive me !
But hope at times throngs in so rich and full,
It mads the brain like wine : come with me, nurse,
Sit by me, lull me calm with gentle tales
Of noble ladies wandering in the wild wood,
Fed on chance earth-nuts, and wild strawberries,
Or milk of silly sheep, and woodland doe.
Or how fair Magdalen 'mid desert sands
Wore out in prayer her lonely blissful years,
Watched by bright angels, till her modest tresses
Wove to her pearly feet their golden shroud.
Come, open all your lore.

[SOPHIA and AGNES enter.]

My mother-in-law !

(*Aside*) Shame on thee, heart ! why sink, whene'er we meet ?

Soph. Daughter, we know of old thy strength, of metal
Beyond us worldlings : shrink not, if the time
Be come which needs its use—

Eliz. What means this preface ? Ah ! your looks are big
With sudden woes—speak out.

Soph. Be calm, and hear
The will of God toward my son, thy husband.

Eliz. What ? is he captive ? Why then—what of that ?
There are friends will rescue him—there's gold for ransom—

We'll sell our castles—live in bowers of rushes—
O God! that I were with him in the dungeon!

Soph. He is not taken.

Eliz. No! he would have fought to the death!
There's treachery! What paynim dog dare face
His lance, who naked braved yon lion's rage,
And eyed the cowering monster to his den?
Speak! Has he fled? or worse?

Soph. Child, he is dead.

Eliz. (*clasping her hands on her knees*). The world is
dead to me, and all its smiles!

Isen. Oh, woe! my Prince! and doubly woe, my
daughter!

[*ELIZABETH springs up and rushes out.*

Oh, stop her—stop my child! She will go mad—
Dash herself down—Fly—Fly—She is not made
Of hard, light stuff, like you.

[*ISENTRUDIS and GUTA run out.*

Soph. I had expected some such passionate outbreak
At the first news: you see now, Lady Agnes,
These saints, who fain would 'wean themselves from earth
Still yield to the affections they despise
When the game's earnest—Now—ere they return—
Your brother, child, is dead.—

Agnes. I know it too well.

So young—so brave—so blest!—And she—she loved
him—

Oh! I repent of all the foolish scoffs
With which I crossed her.

Soph. Yes—the Landgrave's dead—

Attend to me—Alas! my son! my son!
He was my first-born! But he has a brother—
Agnes! we must not let this foreign gipsy,
Who, as you see, is scarce her own wits' mistress,
Flaunt sovereign over us, and our broad lands,
To my son's prejudice—There are barons, child,
Who will obey a knight, but not a saint:
I must at once to them.

Agnes. Oh, let me stay.

Soph. As you shall please—Your brother's landgravate
Is somewhat to you, surely—and your smiles
Are worth gold pieces in a court intrigue,

For her, on her own principles, a downfall
Is a chastening mercy—and a likely one.

Agnes. Oh! let me stay, and comfort her!

Soph.

Romance!

You girls adore a scene—as lookers on.

[*Exit SOPHIA.*

Agnes (alone). Well spoke the old monks, peaceful
watching life's turmoil,
'Eyes which look heavenward, weeping still we see :
God's love with keen flame purges, like the lightning flash,
Gold which is purest, purer still must be.'

[*GUTA enters.*]

Alas! Returned alone! Where has my sister been?

Guta. Thank heaven you hear alone, for such sad
sight would haunt

Henceforth your young hopes—crush your shuddering
fancy down

With dread of like fierce anguish.

You saw her bound forth: we towards her bower in haste
Ran trembling: spell-bound there, before her bridal-bed
She stood, while wan smiles flickered, like the northern
dawn,

Across her worn cheeks' ice-field; keenest memories then
Rushed with strong shudderings through her—as the
winged shaft

Springs from the tense nerve, so her passion hurled her
forth

Sweeping, like fierce ghost, on through hall and corridor,
Tearless, with wide eyes staring, while a ghastly wind
Moaned on through roof and rafter, and the empty helms
Along the walls ran clattering, and above her waved
Dead heroes' banners; swift and yet more swift she drove
Still seeking aimless; sheer against the opposing wall
At last dashed reckless—there with frantic fingers clutched
Blindly the ribbed oak, till that frost of rage
Dissolved itself in tears, and like a babe,
With inarticulate moans, and folded hands,
She followed those who led her, as if the sun
On her life's dial had gone back seven years,
And she were once again the dumb sad child

We knew her ere she married.

Isen. (*entering*). As after wolf wolf presses, leaping
through the snow-glades,
So woe on woe throngs surging up.

Guta. What? treason?

Isen. Treason, and of the foulest. From her state she's
rudely thrust;

Her keys are seized; her weeping babies pent from her:
The wenches stop their sobs to sneer askance,
And greet their fallen censor's new mischance.

Agnes. Alas! Who dared to do this wrong?

Isen. Your mother and your mother's son—
Judge you, if it was knightly done.

Guta. See! see! she comes, with heaving breast,
With bursting eyes, and purpled brow:
Oh that the traitors saw her now!
They know not, sightless fools, the heart they break.

ELIZABETH enters slowly.

Eliz. He is in purgatory now! Alas!
Angels! be pitiful! deal gently with him!
His sins were gentle! That's one cause left for living—
To pray, and pray for him: why all these months
I prayed,—and here's my answer: Dead of a fever!
Why thus? so soon! Only six years for love!
While any formal, heartless matrimony,
Patched up by Court intrigues, and threats of cloisters,
Drags on for six times six, and peasant slaves
Grow old on the same straw, and hand in hand
Slip from life's oozy bank, to float at ease.

[*A knocking at the door.*

That's some petitioner.

Go to—I will not hear them: why should I work,
When he is dead? Alas! was that my sin?
Was he, not Christ, my lodestar? Why not warn me?
Too late! What's this foul dream? Dead at Otranto—
Parched by Italian suns—no woman by him—
He was too chaste! Nought but rude men to nurse!—
If I had been there, I should have watched by him—
Guessed every fancy—God! I might have saved him!

[*A servant-man bursts in.*

Servant. Madam, the Landgrave gave me strict commands—

Isen. The Landgrave, dolt?

Eliz. I might have saved him!

Servant (to Isen.) Ay, saucy madam!—

The Landgrave Henry, lord and master,

Freer than the last, and yet no waster,

Who will not stint a poor knave's beer,

Or spin out Lent through half the year.

Why—I see double!

Eliz. Who spoke there of the Landgrave? What's this drunkard?

Give him his answer—'Tis no time for mumming—

Serv. The Landgrave Henry bade me see you out
Safe through his gates, and that at once, my Lady.
Come!

Eliz. Why—that's hasty—I must take my children
Ah! I forgot—they would not let me see them.

I must pack up my jewels—

Serv.

You'll not need it—

His Lordship has the keys.

Eliz.

He has indeed.

Why, man!—I am thy children's godmother—

I nursed thy wife myself in the black sickness—

Art thou a bird, that when the old tree falls,

Flits off, and sings in the sapling?

[*The man seizes her arm.*

Keep thine hands off—

I'll not be shamed—Lead on: Farewell, my Ladies.

Follow not! There's want to spare on earth already;

And mine own woe is weight enough for me.

Go back, and say, Elizabeth has yet

Eternal homes, built deep in poor men's hearts;

And, in the alleys underneath the wall,

Has bought with sinful mammon heavenly treasure,

More sure than adamant, purer than white whale's bone,

Which now she claims. Lead on: a people's love shall
right me.

[*Exit with Servant.*

Guta. Where now, dame?

Isen.

Where, but after her?

Guta. True heart!

I'll follow to the death.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

*A Street. ELIZABETH and GUTA at the door of a Convent.
Monks in the Porch.*

Eliz. You are afraid to shelter me—afraid.
And so you thrust me forth, to starve and freeze.
Soon said. Why palter o'er these mean excuses,
Which tempt me to despise you?

Monks. Ah! my lady,
We know your kindness—but we poor religious
Are bound to obey God's ordinance, and submit
Unto the powers that be, who have forbidden
All men, alas! to give you food or shelter.

Eliz. Silence! I'll go. Better in God's hand than
man's.

He shall kill us, if we die. This bitter blast
Warping the leafless willows, yon white snow-storms,
Whose wings, like vengeful angels, cope the vault,
They are God's,—We'll trust to them.

[*Monks go in.*

Guta. Mean-spirited!
Fair frocks hide foul hearts. Why, their altar now
Is blazing with your gifts.

Eliz. How long their altar?
To God I gave—and God shall pay me back.
Fool! to have put my trust in living man,
And fancied that I bought God's love, by buying
The greedy thanks of these His earthly tools;
Well—here's one lesson learnt! I thank the Lord!
Henceforth I'll straight to Thee, and to Thy poor.
What? Isentrudis not returned? Alas!
Where are those children?

They will not have the heart to keep them from me—
Oh! have the traitors harmed them?

Guta. Do not think it.
The dowager has a woman's heart.

Eliz. Ay, ay—
But she's a mother—and mothers will dare all things—
Oh! Love can make us fiends, as well as angels.
My babies! Weeping? Oh, have mercy, Lord!
On me heap all Thy wrath—I understand it:

What can blind senseless terror do for them?

Guta. Plead, plead your penances! Great God, consider

All she has done and suffered, and forbear
To smite her like a worldling!

Eliz. Silence, girl!

I'd plead my deeds, if mine own character,
My strength of will had fathered them: but no—
They are His, who worked them in me, in despite
Of mine own selfish and luxurious will—
Shall I bribe Him with His own? For pain, I tell thee
I need more pain than mine own will inflicts,
Pain which shall break that will.—Yet spare them, Lord!
Go to—I am a fool to wish them life—
And greater fool to miscall this life, this headache—
This nightmare of our gross and crude digestion—
This fog which steams up from our freezing clay—
While waking heaven's beyond. No! slay them, traitors!
Cut through the channels of those innocent breaths
Whose music charmed my lone nights, ere they learn
To love the world, and hate the wretch who bore them!
[Weeps.]

Guta. This storm will blind us both: come here, and
shield you
Behind this buttress.

Eliz. What's a wind to me?

I can see up the street here, if they come—
They do not come!—Oh! my poor weanling lambs—
Struck dead by carrion ravens!

What then, I have borne worse. But yesterday
I thought I had a husband—and now—now!
Guta! He called a holy man before he died?

Guta. The Bishop of Jerusalem, 'tis said,
With holy oil, and with the blessed body
Of Him for whom he died, did speed him duly
Upon his heavenward flight.

Eliz. O happy bishop!

Where are those children? If I had but seen him!
I could have borne all then. One word—one kiss!
Hark! What's that rushing? White doves—one—two—
three—

Fleeing before the gale. My children's spirits!

Stay, babies—stay for me ! What ! Not a moment?
And I so nearly ready to be gone?

Guta. Still on your children?

Eliz. Oh ! this grief is light
And floats a-top—well, well ; it hids a while
That gulf too black for speech—My husband's dead !
I dare not think on't.

A small bird dead in the snow ! Alas ! poor minstrel !
A week ago, before this very window,
He warbled, may be, to the slanting sunlight ;
And housewives blest him for a merry singer :
And now he freezes at their doors, like me.
Poor foolish brother ! didst thou look for payment?

Guta. But thou hast light in darkness : he has none—
The bird's the sport of time, while our life's floor
Is laid upon eternity ; no crack in it
But shows the underlying heaven.

Eliz. Art sure?
Does this look like it, girl? No—I'll trust yet—
Some have gone mad for less ; but why should I ?
Who live in time, and not in eternity.
'Twill end, girl, end ; no cloud across the sun
But passes at the last, and gives us back
The face of God once more.

Guta. See here they come,
Dame Isentrudis and your children, all
Safe down the cliff path, through the whirling snow-
drifts.

Eliz. O Lord, my Lord ! I thank Thee !
Loving and merciful, and tender-hearted,
And even in fiercest wrath remembering mercy.
Lo ! here's my ancient foe. What want you, Sir ?

[*Hugo enters.*

Hugo. Want? Faith, 'tis you who want, not I, my
Lady—
I hear, you are gone a begging through the town ;
So, for your husband's sake, I'll take you in ;
For though I can't forget your scurvy usage,
He was a very honest sort of fellow,
Though mad as a March hare ; so come you in.

Eliz. But know you, Sir, that all my husband's vassals
Are bidden bar their doors to me?

Hugo. I know it :
 And therefore come you in : my house is mine :
 No upstarts shall lay down the law to me ;
 Not they, mass : but mind you, no canting here—
 No psalm-singing ; all candles out at eight :
 Beggars must not be choosers. Come along !
Eliz. I thank you, Sir ; and for my children's sake
 I do accept your bounty. (*aside*) Down, proud heart—
 Bend lower—lower ever : thus God deals with thee.
 Go, Guta, send the children after me. [*Exeunt severally.*]

Two Peasants enter.

1st Peas. Here's Father January taken a lease of
 March month, and put in Jack Frost for bailiff. What be
 I to do for spring-feed if the weather holds,—and my
 ryelands as bare as the back of my hand ?

2d Peas. That's your luck. Freeze on, say I, and may
 Mary Mother send us snow a yard deep. I have ten ton
 of hay yet to sell—ten ton, man—there's my luck : every
 man for himself, and—Why here comes that handsome
 canting girl, used to be about the Princess.

GUTA enters.

Guta. Well met, fair sirs ! I know you kind and loyal,
 And bound by many a favor to my mistress :
 Say, will you bear this letter for her sake
 Unto her aunt, the rich and holy lady
 Who rules the nuns of Kitzingen ?

2d Peas. If I do, pickle me in a barrel among cabbage.
 She told me once, God's curse would overtake me
 For grinding of the poor : her turn's come now.

Guta. Will you, then, help her ? She will pay you
 richly.

1st Peas. Ay ? How, dame ? How ? Where will the
 money come from ?

Guta. God knows—

1st Peas And you do not.

Guta. Why, but last winter,
 When all your stacks were fired, she lent you gold.

1st Peas. Well,—I'll be generous : as the times are hard,

Say, if I take your letter, will you promise
To marry me yourself?

Guta. Ay, marry you,
Or anything, if you'll but go to-day :

At once, mind. [Giving him the letter.

1st Peas. Ay, I'll go. Now, you'll remember?

Guta. Straight to her ladyship at Kitzingen.
God and His saints deal with you, as you deal
With us this day. [Exit.

2d Peas. What ! art thou fallen in love promiscuously ?

1st Peas. Why, see, now, man ; she has her mistress'
ear ;

And if I marry her, no doubt they'll make me
Bailliff, or land-steward ; and there's noble pickings
In that same line.

2d Peas. Thou hast bought a pig in a poke :
Her priest will shrive her off from such a bargain.

1st Peas. Dost think ? Well—I'll not fret myself about
it.

See, now, before I start, I must get home
Those pigs from off the forest ; chop some furze ;
And then to get my supper, and my horse's :
And then a man will need to sit a while,
And take his snack of brandy for digestion ;
And then to fettle up my sword and buckler ;
And then, bid 'em all good-bye : and by that time
'Twill be 'most nightfall—I'll just go to-morrow.

[Exeunt.

ISENTRUDIS and GUTA enter, with the Children.

Guta. I warned you of it ; I knew she would not stay
An hour, thus, treated like a slave—an idiot.

Isen. Well, 'twas past bearing : so we are thrust forth
To starve again. Are all your jewels gone ?

Guta. All pawned and eaten—and for her, you know,
She never bore the worth of one day's meal
About her dress. We can but die—No foe
Can ban us from that rest.

Isen. Ay, but these children !—Well—if it must be,
Here, *Guta*, pull off this old withered hand
My wedding-ring ; the man who gave it me

Should be in heaven—and there he'll know my heart.
Take it, girl, take it. Where's the Princess now?
She stopped before a crucifix to pray;
But why so long?

Guta. Oh! prayer, to her rapt soul,
Is like the drunkenness of the autumn bee,
Who, scent-enchanted, on the latest flower,
Heedless of cold, will linger listless on,
And freeze in odorous dreams.

Isen. Ah! here she comes.

Guta. Dripping from head to foot with wet and mire!
How's this?

ELIZABETH *entering.*

Eliz. How? Oh, my fortune rises to full flood:
I met a friend just now, who told me truths
Wholesome and stern, of my deceitful heart—
Would God I had known them earlier!—and enforced
Her lesson so, as I shall ne'er forget it
In body or in mind.

Isen. What means all this?

Eliz. You know the stepping-stones across the ford.
There as I passed, a certain aged crone,
Whom I had fed, and nursed, year after year,
Met me mid-stream—thrust past me stoutly on—
And rolled me headlong in the freezing mire.
There as I lay and weltered,—‘Take that, Madam,
For all your selfish hypocritic pride
Which thought it such a vast humility
To wash us poor folk's feet, and use our bodies
For staves to build withal your Jacob's-ladder.
What! you would mount to heaven upon our backs?
The ass has thrown his rider.’ She crept on—
I washed my garments in the brook hard by—
And came here, all the wiser.

Guta. Miscreant hag!

Isen. Alas, you'll freeze.

Guta. Who could have dreamt the witch
Could harbor such a spite?

Eliz. Nay, who could dream
She would have guessed my heart so well? Dull boors

See deeper than we think, and hide within
Those leathern hulls unfathomable truths,
Which we amid thought's glittering mazes lose.
They grind among the iron facts of life,
And have no time for self-deception.

Isen.

Come—

Put on my cloak—stand here, behind the wall.
Oh ! is it come to this ? She'll die of cold.

Guta. Ungrateful fiend !

Eliz.

Let be—we must not think on't.

The scoff was true—I thank her—I thank God—
This too I needed. I had built myself
A Babel-tower, whose top should reach to heaven,
Of poor men's praise and prayers, and subtle pride
At mine own alms. 'Tis crumbled into dust !
Oh ! I have leant upon an arm of flesh—
And here's its strength ! I'll walk by faith—by faith
And rest my weary heart on Christ alone—
On him, the all-sufficient !

Shame on me ! dreaming thus about myself,
While you stand shivering here.

[*To her little Son.*

Art cold, young knight ?

Knights must not cry—Go slide, and warm thyself.
Where shall we lodge to-night ?

Isen.

There's no place open,

But that foul tavern, where we lay last night.

Elizabeth's Son (clinging to her). O mother, mother !
go not to that house—

Among those fierce lank men, who laughed, and scowled.
And showed their knives, and sang strange ugly songs
Of you and us. O mother ! let us be !

Eliz. Hark ! look ! His father's voice !—his very eye—
Opening so slow and sad, then sinking down
In luscious rest again !

Isen.

Bethink you, child—

Eliz. Oh yes—I'll think—we'll to our tavern friends ;
If they be brutes, 'twas my sin left them so.

Guta. 'Tis but for a night or two : three days will bring
The Abbess hither.

Isen.

And then to Bamberg straight
For knights and men-at-arms ! Your uncle's wrath—

Guta (aside). Hush ! hush ! you'll fret her, if you talk
of vengeance.

Isen. Come to our shelter.

Children.

Oh stay here, stay here !

Behind these walls.

Eliz. Ay—stay a while in peace. The storms are still.
Beneath her eider robe the patient earth
Watches in silence for the sun : we'll sit
And gaze up with her at the changeless heaven,
Until this tyranny be overpast.
Come. (*aside*) Lost ! Lost ! Lost !

[*They enter a neighboring Ruin.*]

SCENE III

A Chamber in the Bishop's Palace at Bamberg.

ELIZABETH and GUTA.

Guta. You have determined ?

Eliz.

Yes—to go with him.

I have kept my oath too long to break it now.

I will to Marpurg, and there waste away

In meditation and in pious deeds,

Till God shall set me free.

Guta.

How if your uncle

Will have you marry ? Day and night, they say,

He talks of nothing else.

Eliz.

Never, girl, never !

Save me from that at least, O God !

Guta.

He spoke

Of giving us, your maidens, to his knights—

In carnal wedlock : but I fear him not :

For God's own word is pledged to keep me pure—

I am a maid.

Eliz. And I, alas ! am none !

O Guta ? dost thou mock my widowed love ?

I was a wife—'tis true : I was not worthy—

But there was meaning in that first wild fancy ;

'Twas but the innocent springing of the sap—

The witless yearning of an homeless heart—

Do I not know that God has pardoned me ?

But now—to rouse and turn of mine own will,

In cool and full foreknowledge, this worn soul

Again to that, which, when God thrust it on me,

Bred but one shame of ever-gnawing doubt,
Were—No, my burning cheeks! We'll say no more.
Ah! loved and lost! Though God's chaste grace should
fail me,

My weak idolatry of thee would give
Strength that should keep me true: with mine own hands
I'd mar this tear-worn face, till petulant man
Should loathe its scarred and shapeless ugliness.

Guta. But your poor children? What becomes of
them?

Eliz. Oh! she who was not worthy of a husband
Does not deserve his children. What are they, darlings,
But snares to keep me from my heavenly spouse
By picturing the spouse I must forget?
Well—'tis blank horror. Yet if grief's good for me,
Let me down into grief's blackest pit,
And follow out God's cure by mine own deed.

Guta. What will your kinsfolk think?

Eliz. What will they think!

What pleases them. That argument's a staff
Which breaks whene'er you lean on't. Trust me, girl,
That fear of man sucks out love's soaring ether,
Baffles faith's heavenward eyes, and drops us down,
To float, like plumeless birds, on any stream.
Have I not proved it?

There was a time with me, when every eye
Did scorch like flame: if one looked cold on me,
I straight accused myself of mortal sins:
Each fopling was my master: I have lied
From very fear of mine own serving-maids.—
That's past, thank God's good grace!

Guta.

And now you leap

To the other end of the line.

Eliz.

In self-defence.

I am too weak to live by half my conscience;
I have no wit to weigh and choose the mean;
Life is too short for logic; what I do
I must do simply; God alone must judge—
For God alone shall guide, and God's elect—
I shrink from earth's chill frosts too much to crawl—
I have snapped opinion's chains, and now I'll soar
Up to the blazing sunlight, and be free.

The BISHOP of BAMBERG enters. CONRAD following.

Bishop. The Devil plagued St. Antony in the likeness of a lean friar! Between mad monks and mad women, bedlam's broke loose, I think.

Con. When the Spirit first descended on the elect, seculars then, too, said mocking, 'These men are full of new wine.'

Bishop. Seculars, truly! If I had not in my secularity picked up a spice of chivalry to the ladies, I should long ago have turned out you and your regulars, to cant elsewhere. Plague on this gout—I must sit.

Eliz. Let me settle your cushion, uncle.

Bishop. So! girl! I sent for you from Botenstein. I had a mind, now, to have kept you there until your wits returned, and you would say Yes to some young noble suitor. As if I had not had trouble enough about your dower!—If I had had to fight for it, I should not have minded:—but these palavers and conferences have fretted me into the gout: and now you would throw all away again, tired with your toy, I suppose. What shall I say to the Counts, Varila, and the Cupbearer, and all the noble knights who will hazard their lands and lives in trying to right you with that traitor? I am ashamed to look them in the face! To give all up to the villain!—To pay him for his treason!

Eliz. Uncle, I give but what to me is worthless. He loves these baubles—let him keep them, then; I have my dower.

Bishop. To squander on nuns and beggars, at this rogue's bidding? Why not marry some honest man? You may have your choice of kings and princes; and if you have been happy with one gentleman, Mass! say I, why can't you be happy with another? What saith the Scripture? 'I will that the younger widows marry, bear children,'—not run after monks, and what not—What's good for the filly, is good for the mare, say I.

Eliz. Uncle, I soar now at a higher pitch—
To be henceforth the bride of Christ alone.

Bishop. Ahem!—a pious notion—in moderation. We must be moderate, my child, moderate: I hate overdoing anything—especially religion.

Con. Madam, between your uncle and myself
This question in your absence were best mooted.

[*Exit ELIZABETH.*

Bishop. How, priest? do you order her about like a
servant-maid?

Con. The saints forbid! Now—ere I lose a moment—
[*Kneeling.*

(*Aside*) All things to all men be—and so save some—

(*Aloud*) Forgive, your grace, forgive me,
If mine unmannered speech in aught have clashed
With your more tempered and melodious judgment :
Your courage will forgive an honest warmth.
God knows, I serve no private interests.

Bishop. Your orders, hey? to wit?

Con. My lord, my lord,
Their may be higher aims : but what I said,
I said but for our Church, and our cloth's honor.
Ladies' religion, like their love, we know,
Requires a gloss of verbal exaltation,
Lest the sweet souls should understand themselves ;
And clergymen must talk up to the mark.

Bishop. We all know, Gospel preached in the mother-
tongue
Sounds too like common sense.

Con. Or too unlike it :
You know the world, your grace ; you know the sex—

Bishop. Ahem! As a spectator.

Con. Philosophicè—
Just so—You know their rage for shaven crowns—
How they'll deny their God—but not their priest—
Flirts—scandal-mongers—in default of both come
Platonic love—worship of art and genius—
Idols which make them dream of heaven, as girls
Dream of their sweethearts, when they sleep on bridecake.
It saves from worse—we are not all Abelards.

Bishop (aside). Some of us have his tongue, if not his
face.

Con. There lies her fancy ; do but balk her of it—
She'll bolt to cloisters, like a rabbit scared.
Head her from that—she'll wed some pink-faced boy—
The more low-bred and penniless, the likelier.
Send her to Marpurg, and her brain will cool.

Tug at the kite, 'twill only soar the higher :
Give it but line, my lord, 'twill drop like slate.
Use but that eagle's glance, whose daring foresight
In chapter, camp, and council, wins the wonder
Of timid trucklers—Scan results and outcomes—
The scale is heavy in your grave's favor.

Bishop. Bah ! priest ! What can this Marpurg-madness
do for me ?

Con. Leave you the tutelage of all her children.

Bishop. Thank you—to play the dry-nurse to three
starving brats.

Con. The minor's guardian guards the minor's lands.

Bishop. Unless they are pitched away in building
hospitals.

Con. Instead of fattening in your wisdom's keeping.

Bishop. Well, well,—but what gross scandal to the
family !

Con. The family, my lord, would gain a saint.

Bishop. Ah ! monk, that canonization costs a frightful
sum.

Con. These fees, just now, would gladly be remitted.

Bishop. These are the last days, faith, when Rome's
too rich to take !

Con. The Saints forbid, my lord, the fisher's see
Were so o'ercursed by Mammon ! But you grieve,
I know, to see foul weeds of heresy
Of late o'errun your diocese.

Bishop. Ay, curse them !
I've hanged some dozens.

Con. Worthy of yourself !
But yet the faith needs here some mighty triumph—
Some bright example, whose resplendent blaze
May tempt that fluttering tribe within the pale
Of Holy Church again—

Bishop. To singe their wings ?

Con. They'll not come near enough. Again—there are
Who dare arraign your prowess, and assert
A churchman's energies were better spent
In pulpits than the tented field. Now mark—
Mark, what a door is opened. Give but scope
To this her huge capacity for sainthood—
Set her, a burning and a shining light

To all your people—Such a sacrifice,
Such loan to God of your own flesh and blood,
Will silence envious tongues, and prove you wise
For the next world as for this ; will clear your name
From calumnies which argue worldliness ;
Buy of itself the joys of paradise ;
And clench your lordship's interest with the pontiff.

Bishop. Well, well, we'll think on't.

Con.

Sir, I doubt you not

Re-enter ELIZABETH.

Eliz. Uncle, I am determind.

Bishop.

So am I.

You shall to Marpurg with this holy man.

Eliz. Ah, there you speak again like my own uncle.
I'll go—to rest (*aside*) and die. I only wait
To see the bones of my beloved laid
In some fit resting-place. A messenger
Proclaims them near. O God !

Bishop.

We'll go, my child,

And meeting them with all due honor, show
In our own worship, honorable minds.

[*Exit ELIZABETH.*

A messenger ! How far off are they, then ?

Serv. Some two days' journey, sir.

Bishop. Two days' journey, and nought prepared ?
Here, chaplain—Brother Hippodamas ! Chaplain, I
say ! (*HIPPODAMAS enters.*) Call the apparitor—ride off
with him, right and left—Don't wait even to take your
hawk—Tell my knights to be with me, with all their men-
at-arms, at noon on the second day. Let all be of the
best, say—the brightest of arms and the newest of gar-
ments. Mass ! we must show our smartest before these
crusaders—they'll be full of new fashions, I warrant 'em
—the monkeys that have seen the world. And here,
boy (*to a PAGE*), set me a stoup of wine in the oriel-room,
and another for this good monk.

Con. Pardon me, blessedness—but holy rule—

Bishop. Oh ! I forgot.—A pail of water and a peck of
beans for the holy man !—Order up my equerry, and bid

my armorer—vestryman, I mean—look out my newest robes.—Plague on this gout.

[*Exeunt, following the Bishop.*]

SCENE IV

The Nave of Bamberg Cathedral. A procession entering the West Door, headed by ELIZABETH and the Bishop, Nobles, etc. Religious bearing the Coffin which encloses LEWIS'S Bones.

1st Lady. See! the procession comes—the mob streams in

At every door. Hark! how the steeples thunder
Their solemn bass above the wailing choir.

2d Lady. They will stop at the screen.

Knight. And there, as I hear, open the coffin. Push forward, ladies, to that pillar: thence you will see all.

1st Peas. Oh dear! oh dear! If any man had told me that I should ride forty miles on this errand, to see him that went out flesh come home grass, like the flower of the field!

2d Peas. We have changed him but not mended him, say I, friend.

1st Peas. Never we. He knew where a yeoman's heart lay! One that would clap a man on the back when his cow died, and behave like a gentleman to him—that never met you after a hailstorm without lightening himself of a few pocket-burners.

2d Peas. Ay, that's your poor-man's plaster: that's your right grease for this world's creaking wheels.

1st Peas. Nay, that's your rich man's plaster, too, and covers the multitude of sins. That's your big pi'te's swimming-bladder, that keeps him atop and feeding: that's his calling and election, his oil of anointing, his *salvum fac regem*, his yeoman of the wardrobe, who keeps the velvet-piled side of this world uppermost, lest his delicate eyes should see the warp that holds it.

2d Peas. Who's the warp, then?

1st Peas. We, man, the friezes and fustians, that rub on till we get frayed through with overwork, and then all's abroad, and the nakedness of Babylon is discovered, and catch who catch can.

Old Woman. Pity they only brought his bones home ! He would have made a lovely corpse, surely. He was a proper man !

1st Lady. Oh the mincing step he had with him ! and the delicate hand on a horse, fingering the reins as St. Cicely does the organ-keys !

2nd Lady. And for hunting, another Siegfried.

Knight. If he was Siegfried the gay, she was Chriemhild the grim ; and as likely to prove a firebrand as the girl in the ballad.

1st Lady. Gay, indeed ! His smiles were like plum-cake, the sweeter the deeper iced. I never saw him speak civil word to woman, but to her.

2nd Lady. O ye saints ! There was honey spilt on the ground ! If I had such a knight, I'd never freeze alone on the chamber-floor, like some that never knew when they were well off. I'd never elbow him off to crusades with my pruderies.

‘Pluck your apples while they’re ripe,
And pull your flowers in May, O !’

Eh ! Mother ?

Old Woman. ‘Till when she grew wizened, and he grew cold,

The balance lay even ’twixt young and old.’

Monk. Thus Satan bears witness perforce against the vanities of Venus ! But what’s this babbling ? Carolationes in the holy place ? Tace, vetula ! taceas faceto also, and that forthwith.

Old Woman. Tace in your teeth, and taceas also, begging-box ! Who put the halter round his waist to keep it off his neck,—who ? Get behind your screen, sirrah ! Am I not a burgher’s wife ? Am I not in the nave ? Am I not on my own ground ? Have I brought up eleven children, without nurse wet or dry, to be taced nowadays by friars in the nave ? Help ! good folks ! Where be these rooks a going ?

Knight. The monk has vanished.

1st Peas. It’s ill letting out waters, he finds. Who is that old gentleman, sir, holds the Princess so tight by the hand ?

Knight. Her uncle, knave, the Bishop.

1st Peas. Very right, he : for she’s almost a born nat-

ural, poor soul. It was a temptation to deal with her.

2d Peas. Thou did'st cheat her shockingly, Frank, time o' the famine, on those nine sacks of maslin meal.

Knight. Go tell her of it, rascal, and she'll thank you for it, and give you a shilling for helping her to a 'cross.'

Old Woman. Taceing free women in the nave! This comes of your princesses, that turn the world upside down, and demean themselves to hob and nob with these black baldicoots!

Eliz. (in a low voice). I saw all Israel scattered on the hills
As sheep that have no shepherd! O my people!
Who crowd with greedy eyes round this my jewel,
Poor ivory, token of his outward beauty—
Oh! had ye known his spirit!—Let his wisdom
Inform your light hearts with that Saviour's likeness
For whom he died! So had you kept him with you;
And from the coming evils gentle Heaven
Had not withdrawn the righteous: 'tis too late!

1st Lady. There, now, she smiles; do you think she ever loved him?

Knight. Never creature, but mealy-mouthed inquisitors, and shaven singing birds. She looks now as glad to be rid of him as any colt broke loose.

1st Lady. What will she do now, when this farce is over?

2d Lady. Found an abbey, that's the fashion, and elect herself abbess—set up the first week for queen-of-all-souls—tyrannize over hysterical girls, who are forced to thank her for making them miserable, and so die a saint.

Knight. Will you pray to her, my fair queen?

2d Lady. Not I, sir; the old Saints send me lovers enough, and to spare—yourself for one.

1st Lady. There is the giant-killer slain. But see—they have stopped: who is that raising the coffin lid?

2d Lady. Her familiar spirit, Conrad the heretic-catcher.

Knight. I do defy him! Thou art my only goddess; My saint, my idol, my—ahem!

1st Lady. That well's run dry.
Look, how she trembles—Now she sinks, all shivering,
Upon the pavement—Why, you'll see nought there
Flirting behind the pillar—Now she rises—
And choking down that proud heart, turns to the altar—
Her hand upon the coffin.

Eliz. I thank thee, gracious Lord, who hast fulfilled
Thine handmaid's mighty longings with the sight
Of my beloved's bones, and dost vouchsafe
This consolation to the desolate.
I grudge not, Lord, the victim which we gave Thee,
Both he and I, of his most precious life,
To aid Thine holy city : though Thou knowest
His sweetest presence was to this world's joy
As sunlight to the taper—Oh ! hadst Thou spared—
Had Thy great mercy let us, hand in hand,
Have toiled through houseless shame, on beggar's dole,
I had been blest : Thou hast him, Lord, Thou hast him—
Do with us what Thou wilt ! If at the price
Oh this one silly hair, in spite of Thee,
I could reclothe these wan bones with his manhood,
And clasp to my shrunk heart my hero's self—
I would not give it !

I will weep no more—
Lead on, most holy ; on the sepulchre
Which stands beside the choir, lay down your burden.
[*To the people.*]

Now, gentle hosts, within the close, hard by,
Will we our court, as queen of sorrows, hold—
The green graves underneath us, and above
The all-seeing vault, which is the eye of God,
Judge of the widow and the fatherless.
There will I plead my children's wrongs, and there,
If, as I think, there boil within your veins
The deep sure currents of your race's manhood,
Ye'll nail the orphans' badge upon your shields,
And own their cause for God's. We name our champions—
Rudolf, the Cupbearer, Leutolf of Erlstetten,
Hartwig of Erba, and our loved Count Walter.
Our knights and vassals, sojourners among you.
Follow us.

[*Exit ELIZABETH. etc. ; the crowd following.*]

ACT IV

SCENE I

Night. The Church of a Convent. ELIZABETH, CONRAD, GERARD, Monks, an Abbess, Nuns, etc., in the distance.

Conrad. What's this new weakness? At your own request

We come to hear your self-imposed vows——
And now you shrink : where are the high-flown fancies
Which but last week, beside your husband's bier,
You vaped forth? Will you become a jest?
You might have counted this tower's cost, before
You blazoned thus your plans abroad.

Eliz. Oh ! spare me !

Con. Spare ? Spare yourself ; and spare big easy words,
Which prove your knowledge greater than your grace.

Eliz. Is there no middle path? No way to keep
My love for them, and God, 'at once unstained?

Con. If this were God's world, Madam, and not the
devil's,
It might be done.

Eliz. God's world, man ! Why, God made it—
The faith asserts it God's.

Con. Potentially—
As every christened rogue's a child of God,
Or those old hags, Christ's brides—Think of your horn-
book—

The world, the flesh, and the devil—a goodly leash !
And yet God made all three. I know the fiend ;
And you should know the world : be sure, be sure,
The flesh is not a stork among the cranes.
Our nature, even in Eden gross and vile,
And by miraculous grace alone upheld,
Is now itself, and foul, and damned, must die
Ere we can live ; let halting worldings, madam,
Maunder against earth's ties, yet clutch them still.

Eliz. And yet God gave them to me—

Con.

In the world ;

Your babes are yours according to the flesh ;
How can you hate the flesh, and love its fruit ?

Eliz. The Scripture bids me love them.

Con.

Truly so,

While you are forced to keep them ; when God's mercy
Doth from the flesh and world deliverance offer,
Letting you bestow them elsewhere, then your love
May cease with its own usefulness, and the spirit
Range in free battle lists ; I'll not waste reasons—
We'll leave you, Madam, to the Spirit's voice.

[CONRAD and GERARD withdraw.

Eliz. (alone). Give up his children ! Why, I'd not
give up

A lock of hair, a glove his hand had hallowed :
And they are his gift ; his pledge ; his flesh and blood
Tossed off my ambition ! Ah ! my husband !
His ghost's sad eyes upbraid me ! Spare me, spare me !
I'd love thee still, if I dared ; but I fear God.
And shall I never more see loving eyes
Look into mine, until my dying day ?
That's this world's bondage : Christ would have me
free.

And 'twere a pious deed to cut myself
The last, last strand, and fly : but whither ? whither ?
What if I cast away the bird i' the hand
And found none in the bush ? 'Tis possible—
What right have I to arrogate Christ's bride-bed ?
Crushed, widowed, sold to traitors ? I, o'er whom
His billows and His storms are sweeping ? God's not
angry :

No, not so much as we with buzzing fly ;
Or in the moment of his wrath's awakening
We should be—nothing. No—there's worse than that—
What if He but sat still, and let be be ?
And these deep sorrows, which my vain conceit
Calls chastenings—meant for me—my ailments' cure—
Were lessons for some angels far away.
And I the corpus vile for the experiment ?
The grinding of the sharp and pitiless wheels
Of some high Providence, which had its mainspring

Ages ago, and ages hence its end?
 That were too horrible!—
 To have torn up all the roses from my garden,
 And planted thorns instead; to have forged my griefs,
 And hugged the griefs I dared not forge; made earth
 A hell, for hope of heaven; and after all,
 These homeless moors of life toiled through, to wake,
 And find blank nothing! Is that angel-world
 A gaudy window, which we paint ourselves
 To hide the dead void night beyond? The present?
 Why here's the present—like this arched gloom,
 It hems our blind souls in, and roofs them over
 With adamant vault, whose only voice
 Is our own wild prayers' echo: and our future?—
 It rambles out in endless aisles of mist,
 The farther still the darker—O my Saviour!
 My God! where art Thou? That's but a tale about Thee,
 That crucifix above—it does but show Thee
 As thou wast once, but not as Thou art now—
 Thy grief, but not Thy glory: where's that gone?
 I see it not without me, and within me
 Hell reigns, not Thou!

(Dashes herself down on the altar steps.

• • • • •

Monks in the distance chanting.

'Kings' daughters were among thine honorable women'—
Eliz. King's daughters! I am one!

• • • • •

Monks. 'Hearken, O daughter and consider; incline
 thine ear:

Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house,
 So shall the King have pleasure in thy beauty:
 For He is thy Lord God, and worship thou him.'

Eliz. (springing up). I will forget them!
 They stand between my soul and its allegiance.
 Thou art my God: what matter if Thou love me?
 I am Thy bond-slave, purchased with Thy life-blood;
 I will remember nothing, save that debt.

Do with me what Thou wilt. Alas, my babies !
He loves them—they'll not need me.

CONRAD *advancing*.

Con. How now, Madam !
Have these your prayers unto a nobler will
Won back that wandering heart ?

Eliz. God's will is spoken !
The flesh is weak ; the spirit's fixed, and dares,—
Stay ! confess, sir,
Did not yourself set on your brothers here
To sing me to your purpose ?

Con. As I live
I meant it not ; yet had I bribed them to it,
Those words were no less God's.

Eliz. I know it, I know it ;
And I'll obey them : come, the victim's ready.

[*Lays her hand on the altar. GERARD, Abbess, and
Monks descend and advance.*]

All worldly goods and wealth, which once I loved,
I do now count but dross : and my beloved,
The children of my womb, I now regard
As if they were another's. God is witness
My pride is to despise myself ; my joy
All insults, sneers, and slanders of mankind ;
No creature now I love, but God alone.
Oh, to be clear, clear, clear, of all but Him !
Lo, here I strip me of all earthly helps—

[*Tearing off her clothes.*]

Naked and barefoot through the world to follow
My naked Lord—And for my filthy pelf—

Con. Stop, Madam—

Eliz. Why so, sir ?

Con. Upon thine oath !

Thy wealth is God's, not thine—How darest renounce
The trust He lays on thee ? I do command thee,
Being, as Aaron, in God's stead to keep it,
Inviolat, for the Church and thine own needs.

Eliz. Be it so—I have no part nor lot in't—

There—I have spoken.

Abbess. O noble soul ! which neither gold, nor love,
Nor scorn can bend !

Gerard. And think what pure devotions,
What holy prayers must they have been, whose guerdon
Is such a flood of grace !

Nuns. What love again !
What flame of charity, which thus prevails
In virtue's guest !

Eliz. Is self-contempt learnt thus ?
I'll home.

Abbess. And yet how blessed, in these cool shades
To rest with us, as in a land-locked pool,
Touched last and lightest by the ruffling breeze.

Eliz. No ! no ! no ! no ! I will not die in the dark :
I'll breathe the free fresh air until the last,
Were it but a month—I have such things to do—
Great schemes—brave schemes—and such a little time !
Though now I am harnessed light as any foot-page.
Come, come, my ladies. [*Exeunt ELIZABETH, etc.*

Ger. Alas, poor lady !

Con. Why alas, my son ?
She longs to die a saint, and here's the way to it.

Ger. Yet why so harsh ? why with remorseless knife
Home to the stem prune back each bough and bud ?
I thought the task of education was
To strengthen, not to crush ; to train and feed
Each subject toward fulfilment of its nature,
According to the mind of God, revealed
In laws, congenital with every kind
And character of man.

Con. A heathen dream !
Young souls but see the gay and warm outside,
And work but in the shallow upper soil.
Mine deeper, and the sour and barren rock
Will stop you soon enough. Who trains God's Saints,
He must transform, not pet—Nature's corrupt through-
out—

A gaudy snake, which must be crushed, not tamed,
A cage of unclean birds, deceitful ever ;
Born in the likeness of the fiend, which Adam
Did at the Fall, the Scripture saith, put on.

Canst thou draw out Leviathan with a hook,
To make him sport for thy maidens? Scripture saith
Who is the prince of this world—so forget not.

Ger. Forgive, if my more weak and carnal judgment
Be startled by your doctrines, and doubt trembling
The path whereon you force yourself and her.

Con. Startled? Belike—belike—let doctrines be ;
Thou shalt be judged by thy works ; so see to them,
And let divines split hairs : dare all thou canst ;
Be all thou darest ; that will keep thy brains full.
Have thy tools ready, God will find thee work—
Then up, and play the man. Fix well thy purpose—
Let one idea, like an orb'd sun,
Rise radiant in thine heaven ; and then round it
All doctrines, forms, and disciplines will range
As dim parhelia, or as needful clouds,
Needful, but mist-begotten, to be dashed
Aside, when fresh shall serve thy purpose better.

Ger. How? dashed aside?

Con. Yea, dashed aside—why not?
The truths, my son, are safe in God's abysses—
While we patch up the doctrines to look like them.
The best are tarnished mirrors—clumsy bridges,
Whereon, as on firm soil, the mob may walk
Across the gulf of doubt, and know no danger.
We, who see heaven, may see the hell which girds it.
Blind trust for them. When I came here from Rome,
Among the Alps, all through one frost-bound dawn,
Waiting with sealed lips the noisy day,
I walked upon a marble mead of snow—
An angel's spotless plume, laid there for me :
Then from the hillside, in the melting noon,
Looked down the gorge, and lo ! no bridge, no snow—
But seas of writhing glacier, gashed and scored
With splintered gulfs, and fathomless crevasses,
Blue lips of hell, which sucked down roaring rivers
The fiends who fled the sun. The path of Saints
Is such ; so shall she look from heaven, and see
The road which led her thither. Now we'll go,
And find some lonely cottage for her lodging ;
Her shelter now is but a crumbling ruin
Roofed in with pine boughs—discipline more healthy

For soul, than body : She's not ripe for death.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II

*Open space in a Suburb of Marpurg, near ELIZABETH'S Hut.
COUNT WALTER and COUNT PAMA of Hungary entering.*

C. Pama. I have prepared my nerves for a shock.

C. Wal. You are wise, for the world's upside down here. The last gateway brought us out of Christendom into the New Jerusalem, the fifth Monarchy, where the Saints possess the earth. Not a beggar here but has his pockets full of fair ladies' tokens : not a barefooted friar but rules a princess.

C. Pama. Creeping, I opine, into widows' houses, and for a pretence making long prayers.

C. Wal. Don't quote Scripture here, sir, especially in that gross literal way ! The new lights here have taught us that Scripture's saying one thing, is a certain proof that it means another. Except, by the bye, in one text.

C. Pama. What's that ?

C. Wal. 'Ask, and it shall be given you.'

C. Pama. Ah ! So we are to take nothing literally, that they may take literally everything themselves ?

C. Wal. Humph ! As for your text, see if they do not saddle it on us before the day is out, as glibly as ever you laid it on them. Here comes the lady's tyrant, of whom I told you.

CONRAD advances from the Hut.

Con. And what may Count Walter's valor want here ?

[*COUNT WALTER turns his back.*]

C. Pama. I come, Sir Priest, from Andreas, king renowned

Of Hungary, ambassador unworthy
Unto the Landgravine, his saintly daughter ;
And fain would be directed to her presence.

Con. That is as I shall choose. But I'll not stop you.
I do not build with straw. I'll trust my pupils
To worldlings' honeyed tongues, who make long prayers,

And enter widows' houses for pretence.
There dwells the lady, who has chosen too long
The better part, to have it taken from her.
Besides that with strange dreams and revelations
She has of late been edified.

C. Wal. Bah ! but they will serve your turn—and hers.

Con. What do you mean ?

C. Wal. When you have cut her off from child and friend, and even Isentrudis and Guta, as I hear, are thrust out by you to starve, and she sits there, shut up like a bear in a hole, to feed on her own substance ; if she has not some of these visions to look at, how is she, or any other of your poor self-gorged prisoners, to help fancying herself the only creature on earth ?

Con. How now ? Who more than she, in faith and practice, a living member of the Communion of Saints ? Did she not lately publicly dispense in charity in a single day five hundred marks and more ? Is it not my continual labor to keep her from utter penury through her extravagance in almsgiving ? For whom does she take thought but for the poor on whom, day and night, she spends her strength ? Does she not tend them from the cradle, nurse them, kiss their sores, feed them, bathe them, with her own hands, clothe them, living and dead, with garments, the produce of her own labor ? Did she not of late take into her own house a paralytic boy, whose loathsomeness had driven away every one else ? And now that we have removed that charge, has she not with her a leprous boy, to whose necessities she ministers hourly, by day and night ? What valley but blesses her for some school, some chapel, some convent, built by her munificence ! Are not the hospices, which she has founded in divers towns, the wonder of Germany ?—wherein she daily feeds and houses a multitude of the infirm poor of Christ ? Is she not followed at every step by the blessings of the poor ? Are not her hourly intercessions for the souls and bodies of all around incessant, world-famous, mighty to save ? While she lives only for the Church of Christ, will you accuse her of selfish isolation ?

C. Wal. I tell you, monk, if she were not healthier by God's making than ever she will be by yours, her charity would be by this time double-distilled selfishness ; the

mouths she fed, cupboards to store good works in ; the backs she warmed, clothes-horses to hang out her wares before God ; her alms not given, but fairly paid, a halfpenny for every halfpenny-worth of eternal life ; earth her chessboard, and the men and women on it merely pawns for her to play a winning game—puppets and horn-books to teach her unit holiness—a private workshop in which to work out her own salvation. Out upon such charity !

Con. God hath appointed that our virtuous deeds
Each merit their rewards.

C. Wal. Go to—go to. I have watched you and your crew, how you preach up selfish ambition for divine charity and call prurient longings celestial love, while you blaspheme that very marriage from whose mysteries you borrow all your cant. The day will come when every husband and father will hunt you down like vermin ; and may I live to see it.

Con. Out on thee, heretic !

C. Wal. (drawing). Liar ! At last ?

C. Pama. In God's name, sir, what if the Princess finds us ?

C. Wal. Ay—for her sake. But put that name on me again, as you do on every good Catholic who will not be your slave and puppet, and if thou goest home with ears and nose, there is no hot blood in Germany.

[*They move towards the Cottage.*]

Con. (alone). Were I as once I was, I could revenge :

But now all private grudges wane like mist

In the keen sunlight of my full intent ;

And this man counts but for some sullen bull

Who paws and mutters at unheeding pilgrims

His empty wrath : yet let him bar my path,

Or stay me but one hour in my life-purpose,

And I will fell him as a savage beast,

God's foe, not mine. Beware thyself, Sir Count !

[*Exit. The Counts return from the Cottage.*]

C. Pama. Shortly she will return ; here to expect her

Is duty both, and honor. Pardon me—

Her humors are well known here ? Passers by

Will guess who 'tis we visit ?

C. Wal.

Very likely.

C. Pama. Well, travellers see strange things—and do them too.

Hem ! this turf-smoke affects my breath : we might
Draw back a space.

C. Wal. Certie, we were in luck,
Or both our noses would have been snapped off
By those two she-dragons ; how their sainthoods squealed
To see a brace of beards peep in ! Poor child !
Two sweet companions for her loneliness !

C. Pama. But ah ! what lodging ! 'Tis at that my heart
bleeds !

That hut whose rough and smoke-embrowned spars
Dip to the cold clay floor on either side !
Her seats bare deal !—her only furniture
Some earthen crock or two ! Why, sir, a dungeon
Were scarce more frightful : such a choice must argue
Aberrant senses, or degenerate blood !

C. Wal. What ? Were things foul ?

C. Pama.

I marked not, sir.

C. Wal.

I did.

You might have eat your dinner off the floor.

C. Pama. Off any spot, sir, which a princess' foot
Had hallowed by its touch.

C. Wal.

Most courtierly.

Keep, keep those sweet saws for the lady's self.

(*Aside*) Unless that shock of the nerves shall send them
flying.

C. Pama. Yet whence this depth of poverty ? I thought
You and her champions had recovered for her
Her lands and titles.

C. Wal.

Ay ; that coward Henry

Gave them all back as lightly as he took them :

Certie, we were four gentle applicants—

And Rudolph told him some unwelcome truths—

Would God that all of us might hear our sins,

As Henry heard that day !

C. Pama.

Then she refused them ?

C. Wal. 'It ill befits,' quoth she, 'my royal blood,
To take extorted gifts ; I tender back
By you to him, for this his mortal life,
That which he thinks by treason cheaply bought ;
'To which my son shall, in his father's right,
By God's good will, succeed. For that dread height
May Christ by many woes prepare his youth !'

C. Pama. Humph !

C. Wal. Why here—no, 't cannot be—

C. Poma. What hither comes

Forth from the hospital, where, as they told us,

The Princess labors in her holy duties ?

A parti-colored ghost that stalks for penance ?

Ah ! a good head of hair, if she had kept it

A thought less lank ; a handsome face too, trust me,

But worn to fiddle-strings ; well, we'll be knightly—

[*As ELIZABETH meets him.*]

Stop, my fair queen of rags and patches, turn

Those solemn eyes a moment from your distaff,

And say, what tidings your magnificence

Can bring us of the Princess ?

Eliz. I am she.

[*COUNT PAMA crosses himself and falls on his knees.*]

C. Pama. O blessed saints and martyrs ! Open, earth !

And hide my recreant knighthood in thy gulf !

Yet, mercy, Madam ! for till this strange day

Who e'er saw spinning wool, like village-maid,

A royal scion ?

C. Wal. (kneeling). My beloved mistress !

Eliz. Ah ! faithful friend ! Rise, gentles, rise, for shame ;

Nay, blush not, gallant sir. You have seen, ere now,

Kings' daughters do worse things than spinning wool,

Yet never reddened. Speak your errand out.

C. Pama. I from your father, Madam—

Eliz.

Oh ! I divine ;

And grieve that you so far have journeyed, sir,

Upon a bootless quest.

C. Pama.

But hear me, Madam—

If you return with me (o'erwhelming honor !

For such mean bodyguard too precious treasure)

Your father offers to you half his wealth ;

And countless hosts, whose swift and loyal blades

From traitorous grasp shall vindicate your crown.

Eliz. Wealth ? I have proved it, and have tossed it from
me :

I will not stoop again to load with clay.

War? I have proved that too : should I turn loose
On these poor sheep the wolf whose fangs have gored me,
God's bolt would smite me dead.

C. Pama. Madam, by his gray hairs he doth entreat
you.

Eliz. Alas ! small comfort would they find in me !
I am a stricken and most luckless deer,
Whose bleeding track but draws the hounds of wrath
Where'er I pause a moment. He has children
Br'd at his side, to nurse him in his age—
While I am but an alien and a changeling,
Whom, ere my plastic sense could impress take
Either of his features or his voice, he lost.

C. Pama. Is it so? Then pardon, Madam, but your
father
Must by a father's right command—

Eliz. Command ! Ay, that's the phrase of the world :
well—tell him,
But tell him gently too—that child and father
Are names, whose earthly sense I have forsworn,
And know no more : I have a heavenly spouse,
Whose service doth all other claims annul.

C. Wal. Ah, lady, dearest lady, be but ruled !
Your Saviour will be there as near as here.

Eliz. What? Thou too, friend? Dost thou not know
me better?

Wouldst have me leave undone what I begin ?
(*To COUNT PAMA*) My father took the cross, sir : so did I :
As he would die at his post, so will I die :
He is a warrior : ask him, should I leave
This my safe fort, and well-proved vantage-ground,
To roam on this world's flat and fenceless steppes?

C. Pama. Pardon me, Madam, if my grosser wit
Fail to conceive your sense.

Eliz. It is not needed.
Be but the mouthpiece to my father, sir ;
And tell him—for I would not anger him—
Tell him, I am content—say, happy—tell him
I prove my kin by prayers for him, and masses
For her who bore me. We shall meet on high.
And say, his daughter is a mighty tree,
From whose wide roots a thousand sapling suckers,

Drink half their life ; she dare not snap the threads,
And let her offshoots wither. So farewell.

Within the convent there, as mine own guests,
You shall be fitly lodged. Come here no more.

C. Wal. C. Pama. Farewell, sweet Saint ! [*Exeunt.*

Eliz. May God go with you both.

No ! I will win for him a nobler name,
Than captive crescents, piles of turbaned heads,
Or towns retaken from the Tartar, give.

In me he shall be greatest ; my report
Shall through the ages win the quires of heaven
To love and honor him ; and hinds, who bless
The poor man's patron saint, shall not forget
How she was fathered with a worthy sire. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

Night. Interior of ELIZABETH'S Hut. A leprous Boy sleeping on a Mattress. ELIZABETH watching by him.

Eliz. My shrunk limbs, stiff from many a blow,
Are crazed with pain.

A long dim formless fog-bank, creeping low,
Dulls all my brain.

I remember two young lovers,
In a golden gleam.
Across the brooding darkness shrieking hovers
That fair, foul dream.

My little children call to me,
'Mother ! so soon forgot ?'
From out dark nooks their yearning faces startle me,
Go, babes ! I know you not !

Pray ! pray ! or thou'lt go mad.

.

The past's our own :

No fiend can take that from us ! Ah, poor boy !
Had I, like thee, been bred from my black birth-hour
In filth and shame, counting the soulless months

Only by some fresh ulcer! I'll be patient—
Here's something yet more wretched than myself.
Sleep thou on still, poor charge—though I'll not grudge
One moment of my sickening toil about thee,
Best counsellor—dumb preacher, who dost warn me
How much I have enjoyed, how much have left,
Which thou hast never known. How am I wretched?
The happiness thou hast from me, is mine,
And makes me happy. Ay, there lies the secret—
Could we but crush that ever-craving lust
For bliss, which kills all bliss, and lose our life,
Our barren unit life, to find again
A thousand lives in those for whom we die.
So were we men and women, and should hold
Our rightful rank in God's great universe,
Wherein, in heaven and earth, by will or nature,
Nought lives for self—All, all—from crown to footstool—
The Lamb, before the world's foundations slain—
The angels, ministers to God's elect—
The sun, who only shines to light a world—
The clouds, whose glory is to die in showers—
The fleeting streams, who in their ocean-graves
Flee the decay of stagnant self-content—
The oak, ennobled by the shipwright's axe—
The soil, which yields its marrow to the flower—
The flower, which feeds a thousand velvet worms,
Born only to be prey for every bird—
All spend themselves for others: and shall man,
Earth's rosy blossom—image of his God—
Whose twofold being is the mystic knot
Which couples earth and heaven—doubly bound
As being both worm and angel, to that service
By which both worms and angels hold their life—
Shall he, whose every breath is debt on debt,
Refuse, without some hope of further wage
Which he calls Heaven, to be what God has made him?
No! let him show himself the creature's lord
By freewill gift of that self-sacrifice
Which they perforce by nature's law must suffer.
This too I had to learn (I thank thee, Lord!),
To lie crushed down in darkness and the pit—
To lose all heart and hope—and yet to work.

What lesson could I draw from all my own woes—
 Ingratitude, oppression, widowhood—
 While I could hug myself in vain conceits
 Of self-contented sainthood—inward raptures—
 Celestial palms—and let ambition's gorge
 Taint heaven, as well as earth? Is selfishness
 For time, a sin—spun out to eternity
 Celestial prudence? Shame! Oh, thrust me forth,
 Forth, Lord, from self, until I toil and die
 No more for heaven and bliss, but duty, Lord,
 Duty to Thee, although my meed should be
 The hell which I deserve! [Sleeps.]

Two Women enter.

1st Woman. What! snoring still? 'Tis nearly time to
 wake her
 To do her penance.

2d Woman. Wait a while, for love :
 Indeed, I'm almost ashamed to punish
 A bag of skin and bones.

1st Woman. 'Tis for her good :
 She has had her share of pleasure in this life
 With her gay husband ; she must have her pain.
 We bear it as a thing of course ; we know
 What mortifications are, although I say it
 That should not.

2d Woman. Why, since my old tyrant died,
 Fasting I've sought the Lord, like any Anna,
 And never tasted fish, nor flesh, nor fowl,
 And little stronger than water.

1st Woman. Plague on this watching !
 What work, to make a saint of a fine lady !
 See now, if she had been some laborer's daughter,
 She might have saved herself, for aught he cared ;
 But now—

2d Woman. Hush ! here the master comes :
 I hear him.—

CONRAD enters.

Con. My peace, most holy, wise, and watchful ward-
 ens !

She sleeps? Well, what complaints have you to bring
Since last we met? How? blowing up the fire?
Cold is the true saint's element—he thrives
Like Alpine gentians, where the frost is keenest—
For there heaven's nearest—and the ether purest—
(*Aside*) And he most bitter.

2d Woman.

Ah! sweet master,

We are not yet as perfect as yourself.

Con. But how has she behaved?

1st Woman.

Just like herself—

Now ruffling up like any tourney queen;
Now weeping in dark corners; then next minute
Begging for penance on her knees.

2d Woman.

One trick's cured;

That lust of giving; Isentrude and Guta,
The hussies, came here begging but yestreen,
Vowed they were starving.

Con.

Did she give to them?

2d Woman. She told them that she dared not.

Con.

Good. For them,

I will take measures that they shall not want:
But see you tell her not: she must be perfect.

1st Woman. Indeed, there's not much chance of that a
while.

There's others, might be saints, if they were young,
And handsome, and had titles to their names,
If they were helped toward heaven, now—

Con.

Silence, horse-skull!

Thank God, that you are allowed to use a finger
Towards building up His chosen tabernacle.

2d Woman. I consider that she blasphemes the means
of grace.

Con. Eh? that's a point, indeed.

2d Woman.

Why, yesterday,

Within the church, before a mighty crowd,
She mocked at all the lovely images,
And said 'the money had been better spent
On food and clothes, instead of paint and gilding:
They were but pictures, whose reality
We ought to bear within us.'

Con.

Awful doctrine!

1st Woman. Look at her carelessness, again—the distaff

Or woolcomb in her hands, even on her bed.
Then, when the work is done, she lets those nuns
Cheat her of half the price.

2d Woman. The Aldenburgers.

Con. Well, well, what more misdoings?

(aside) Pah! I am sick on't.

(Aloud) Go sit, and pray by her until she wakes.

The women retire. CONRAD sits down by the fire.

I am dwindling to a peddling chamber-chaplain,
Who hunts for crabs and ballads in maids' sleeves,
I, who have shuffled kingdoms. Oh! 'tis easy
To beget great deeds; but in the rearing of them—
The threading in cold blood each mean detail,
And furzebrake of half-pertinent circumstance—
There lies the self-denial.

Women (in a low voice). Master! sir! look here!

Eliz. (rising). Have mercy, mercy, Lord!

Con. What is it, my daughter? No—she answers
not—

Her eyeballs through their sealed lids are bursting,
And yet she sleeps: her body does but mimic
The absent soul's enfranchised wanderings
In the spirit-world.

Eliz. Oh! she was but a worldling!

And think, good Lord, if that this world is hell,
What wonder if poor souls whose lot is fixed here,
Meshed down by custom, wealth, rank, pleasure, ignor-
ance,

Do hellish things in it? Have mercy, Lord;
Even for my sake, and all my woes, have mercy!

Con. There! she is laid again—Some bedlam dream.
So—here I sit; am I a guardian angel
Watching by God's elect? or nightly tiger,
Who waits upon a dainty point of honor
To clutch his prey, till it shall wake and move?
We'll waive that question: there's eternity
To answer that in.

How like a marble-carven nun she lies
Who prays with folded palms upon her tomb,
Until the resurrection! Fair and holy!

O happy Lewis ! Had I been a knight—
A man at all—What's this ? I must be brutal,
Or I shall love her : and yet that's no safeguard ;
I have marked it oft : ay—with that devilish triumph
Which eyes its victim's writhings, still will mingle
A sympathetic thrill of lust—say, pity.

Eliz. (awaking). I am heard ! She is saved !
Where am I ? What ! have I overslept myself ?
Oh, do not beat me ! I will tell you all—
I have had awful dreams of the other world.

1st Woman. Ay ! ay ! a fine excuse for lazy women,
Who cry nightmare with lying on their backs.

Eliz. I will be heard ! I am a prophetess !
God hears me, why not ye ?

Con. Quench not the Spirit :
If He have spoken, daughter, we must listen.

Eliz. Methought from out the red and heaving earth
My mother rose, whose broad and queenly limbs
A fiery arrow did impale, and round
Pursuing tongues oozed up of nether fire,
And fastened on her : like a winter-blast
Among the steeples, then she shrieked aloud,
'Pray for me, daughter ; save me from this torment,
For thou canst save !' And then she told a tale ;
It was not true—my mother was not such—
O God ! The pander to a brother's sin !

1st Woman. There now ? The truth is out ! I told you
sister,
About that mother—

Con. Silence, hags ! what then ?

Eliz. She stretched her arms, and sank. Was it a sin
To love that sinful mother ? There I lay—
And in the spirit far away I prayed ;
What words I spoke, I know not, nor how long ;
Until a small still voice sighed, 'Child, thou art heard :'
Then on the pitchy dark a small bright cloud
Shone out, and swelled, and neared, and grew to form,
Till from it blazed my pardoned mother's face
With nameless glory ! Nearer still she pressed,
And bent her lips to mine—a mighty spasm
Ran crackling through my limbs, and thousand bells
Rang in my dizzy ears—And so I woke.

Con. 'Twas but a dream.

Eliz. 'Twas more ! 'twas more ! I've tests :
From youth I have lived in two alternate worlds,
And night is live like day. This was no goblin !
'Twas a true vision, and my mother's soul
Is freed by my poor prayers from penal fires,
And waits for me in bliss.

Con. Well—be it so then.
Thou seest herein what prize obedience merits.
Now to press forwards : I require your presence
Within the square, at noon, to witness there
The fiery doom—most just and righteous doom—
Of two convicted and malignant heretics,
Who at the stake shall expiate their crime,
And pacify God's wrath against this land.

Eliz. No ! no ! I will not go !

Con. What's here ? Thou wilt not ?
I'll drive thee there with blows.

Eliz. Then I will bear them,
Even as I bore the last, with thankful thoughts
Upon those stripes my Lord endured for me.
Oh, spare them, sir ! poor blindfold sons of men !
No saint but daily errs,—and must they burn,
Ah, God ! for an opinion ?

Con. Fool ! opinions ?
Who cares for their opinions ? 'Tis rebellion
Against the system which upholds the world
For which they die : so, lest the infection spread,
We must cut off the members, whose disease
We'd pardon, could they keep it to themselves.

[ELIZABETH *weeps*]

Well, I'll not urge it,—Thou hast other work—
But for thy petulant words do thou this penance :
I do forbid thee here, to give henceforth
Food, coin, or clothes, to any living soul.
Thy thriftless waste doth scandalize the elect,
And maim thine usefulness : thou dost elude
My wise restrictions still : 'Tis great, to live
Poor, among riches ; when thy wealth is spent,
Want is not merit, but necessity.

Eliz. Oh, let me give !
That only pleasure have I left on earth !

Con. And for that very cause thou must forego it,
 And so be perfect. She who lives in pleasure
 Is dead, while yet she lives ; grace brings no merit
 When 'tis the express of our own self-will.
 To shrink from what we practice : do God's work
 In spite of loathings : that's the path of saints.
 I have said.

[*Exit with the Women.*]

Eliz. Well ! I am freezing fast—I have grown of late
 Too weak to nurse my sick ; and now this outlet,
 This one last thawing spring of fellow-feeling,
 Is choked with ice—Come, Lord, and set me free.
 Think me not hasty ! measure not mine age,
 O Lord, by these my four-and-twenty winters.
 I have lived three lives—three lives.
 For fourteen years I was an idiot girl ;
 Then I was born again ; and for five years,
 I lived ! I lived ! and then I died once more ;—
 One day when many knights came marching by,
 And stole away—we'll talk no more of that.
 And so these four years since, I have been dead,
 And all my life is hid with Christ in God.
 Nunc igitur, dimittas, Domine, servam tuam.

SCENE IV

The same. ELIZABETH lying on Straw in a corner. A
 crowd of Women round her. CONRAD entering.

Con. As I expected—
 A sermon-mongering herd about her death-bed,
 Stifling her with fusty sighs, as flocks of rooks
 Despatch, with pious pecks, a wounded brother.
 Cant, howl, and whimper ! Not an old fool in the town
 Who thinks herself religious, but must see
 The last of the show and mob the deer to death.
 (*Advancing*) Hail ! holy ones ! How fares your charge
 to-day ?

Abbess. After the blessed sacrament received,
 As surfeited with those celestial viands,
 And with the blood of life intoxicate,
 She lay entranced : and only stirred at times

To eructate sweet edifying doctrine
Culled from your darling sermons.

Woman. Heavenly grace
Imbues her so throughout, that even when pricked
She feels no pain.

Con. A miracle, no doubt.
Heaven's work is ripe, and like some more I know,
Having begun in the spirit, in the flesh
She's now made perfect : she hath had warnings, too,
Of her decease ; and prophesied to me,
Three weeks ago, when I lay like to die,
That I should see her in her coffin yet.

Abbess. 'Tis said, she heard in dreams her Saviour call
her
To mansions built for her from everlasting.

Con. Ay, so she said.

Abbess. But tell me, in her confession
Was there no holy shame—no self-abhorrence
For the vile pleasures of her carnal wedlock?

Con. She said no word thereon : as for her shrift,
No Chrisom child could show a chart of thoughts
More spotless than were hers.

Nun. Strange, she said nought ;
I had hoped she had grown more pure.

Con. When, next, I asked her,
How she would be interred ; 'In the vilest weeds,'
Quoth she, 'my poor hut holds ; I will not pamper
When dead, that flesh, which living I despised.
And for my wealth, see it to the last do it
Bestowed upon the poor of Christ.'

2d Woman. O grace !

3d Woman. O soul to this world poor, but rich toward
God !

Eliz. (awaking). Hark ! how they cry for bread !
Poor souls ! be patient !
I have spent all—
I'll sell myself for a slave—feed them with the price.
Come, Guta ! Nurse ! We must be up and doing !
Alas ! they are gone, and begging !
Go ! go ! They'll beat me, if I give you aught :
I'll pray for you, and so you'll go to Heaven.
I am a saint—God grants me all I ask.

But I must love no creature. Why, Christ loved—
 Mary he loved, and Martha, and their brother—
 Three friends ! and I have none !

When Lazarus lay dead, He groaned in spirit,
 And wept—like any widow—Jesus wept !
 I'll weep, weep, weep ! pray for that ' gift of tears.'
 They took my friends away, but not my eyes,
 Oh, husband, babes, friends, nurse ! To die alone !
 Crack, frozen brain ! Melt, icicle within !

Women. Alas ! sweet saint ! By bitter pangs she wins
 Her crown of endless glory !

Con. But she wins it !
 Stop that vile sobbing ! she's unmanned enough
 Without your maudlin sympathy.

Eliz. What ? weeping ?
 Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me—
 Weep for yourselves.

Women. We do, alas ! we do !
 What are we without you ? *[A pause.]*

Woman. Oh, listen, listen !
 What sweet sounds from her fast-closed lips are welling,
 As from the caverned shaft, deep miner's songs ?

Eliz. (in a low voice). Through the stifling room
 Floats strange perfume ;
 Through the crumbling thatch
 The angels watch,

Over the rotting roof-tree.

They warble, and flutter, and hover, and glide,
 Wafting old sounds to my dreary bedside,
 Snatches of songs which I used to know
 When I slept by my nurse, and the swallows
 Called me at day-dawn from under the eaves.

Hark to them ! Hark to them now—
 Fluting like woodlarks, tender and low—
 Cool rustling leaves—tinkling waters—
 Sheepbells over the lea—

In their silver plumes Eden-gales whisper—
 In their hands Eden-lilies—not for me—not for me—

No crown for the poor fond bride !

The song told me so,

Long, long ago,

How the maid chose the white lily ;

But the bride she chose
The red red rose,
And by its thorn died she.

Well—in my Father's house are many mansions—

I have trodden the waste howling ocean foam,
Till I stand upon Canaan's shore,
Where Crusaders from Zion's towers call me home
To the saints who are gone before.

Con. Still on Crusaders? [*Aside*
Abbess. What was that sweet song, which just now, my
Princess,

You murmured to yourself?

Eliz. Did you not hear
A little bird between me and the wall,
That sang and sang?

Abbess. We heard him not, fair Saint.

Eliz. I heard him, and his merry carol revelled
Through all my brain, and woke my parched throat
To join his song : then angel melodies
Burst through the dull dark, and the mad air quivered
Unutterable music. Nay, you heard him.

Abbess. Nought save yourself.

Eliz. Slow hours ! Was that the cock-crow ?

Woman. St. Peter's bird did call.

Eliz. Then I must up—

To matins, and to work—No, my work's over.

And what is it, what?

One drop of oil on the salt seething ocean !

Thank God, that one was born at this same hour,

Who did our work for us : we'll talk of Him :

We shall go mad with thinking of ourselves—

We'll talk of Him, and of that new-made star,

Which, as he stooped into the Virgin's side,

From off His finger, like a signet-gem,

He dropped in the empyrean for a sign.

But the first tear He shed at this His birth-hour,

When He crept weeping forth to see our woe,

Fled up to Heaven in mist, and hid forever

Our sins, our works, and that same new-made star.

Woman. Poor soul ! she wanders !

Con. Wanders, fool ? her madness
Is worth a million of your paters, mumbled
At every station between—

Eliz. Oh ! thank God
Our eyes are dim ! What should we do, if he,
The sneering fiend, who laughs at all our toil,
Should meet us face to face ?

Con. We'd call him fool.

Eliz. There ! There ! Fly, Satan, fly ! 'Tis gone !

Con. The victory's gained at last !
The fiend is baffled, and her saintship sure !
O people blest of Heaven !

Eliz. O master, master,
You will not let the mob, when I lie dead,
Make me a show—paw over all my limbs—
Pull out my hair—pluck off my finger-nails—
Wear scraps of me for charms and amulets,
As if I were a mummy, or a drug ?
As they have done to others—I have seen it—
Nor set me up in ugly naked pictures
In every church, that cold world-hardened wits
May gossip o'er my secret tortures ? Promise—
Swear to me ! I demand it !

Con. No man lights
A candle, to be hid beneath a bushel :
Thy virtues are the Church's dower : endure
All which the edification of the faithful
Makes needful to be published.

Eliz. O my God !
I had stripped myself of all, but modesty !
Dost Thou claim yet that victim ? Be it so.
Now take me home ! I have no more to give Thee !
So weak—and yet no pain—why, now naught ails me !
How dim the lights burn ! Here—
Where are you, children ?
Alas ! I had forgotten.
Now I must sleep—for ere the sun shall rise,
I must begone upon a long, long journey
To him I love.

Con. She means her heavenly Bridegroom—
The Spouse of souls.

Eliz. I said, to him I love.
Let me sleep, sleep.
You will not need to wake me—so—good-night.

[Folds herself into an attitude of repose. The Scene closes.]

ACT V

SCENE I. A. D. 1235.

A Convent at Marpurg. Cloisters of the Infirmary. Two aged Monks sitting.

1st Monk. So they will publish to-day the Landgrave's canonization, and translate her to the new church prepared for her. Alack, now, that all the world should be out sight-seeing and saint-making, and we laid up here, like two lame jackdaws in a belfry!

2d Monk. Let be, man—let be. We have seen sights and saints in our time. And, truly, this insolation suits my old bones better than processioning.

1st Monk. 'Tis pleasant enough in the sun, were it not for the flies. Look--there's a lizard. Come you here, little run-about; here's game for you.

2d Monk. A tame fool, and a gay one—Munditiæ mundanis.

1st Monk. Catch him a fat fly—my hand shaketh.

2d Monk. If one of your new-lights were here, now, he'd pluck him for a fiend, as Dominic did the live sparrow in chapel.

1st Monk. There will be precious offerings made to-day, of which our house will get its share.

2d Monk. Not we; she always favored the Franciscans most.

1st Monk. 'Twas but fair—they were her kith and kin. She lately put on the habit of their third minors.

2d Monk. So have half the fine gentlemen and ladies in Europe. There's one of your new inventions, now, for letting grand folks serve God and mainmon at once, and emptying honest monasteries, where men give up all for the Gospel's sake. And now these Pharisees of Franciscans will go off with full pockets—

1st Monk. While we poor publicans—

2d Monk. Shall not come home all of us justified, I think.

1st Monk. How? Is there scandal among us?

2d Monk. Ask not—ask not. Even a fool, when he holds his peace, is counted wise. Of all sins, avoid that same gossiping.

1st Monk. Nay, tell me now. Are we not like David and Jonathan? Have we not worked together, prayed together, journeyed together, and been soundly flogged together, more by token, any time this forty years? And now is news so plenty, that thou darest to defraud me of a morsel?

2d Monk. I'll tell thee—but be secret. I knew a man hard by the convent (names are dangerous, and a bird of the air shall carry the matter), one that hath a mighty eye for a heretic, if thou knewest him.

1st Monk. Who carries his poll screwed on over-tight, and sits with his eyes shut in chapel?

2d Monk. The same. Such a one to be in evil savor—to have the splendor of the pontifical countenance turned from him, as though he had taken Christians for Amalekites, and slain the people of the Lord.

1st Monk. How now?

2d Monk. I only speak as I hear: for my sister's son is chaplain, for the time being, to a certain Archisacerdos, a foreigner, now lodging where thou knowest. The young man being hid, after some knavery, behind the arras, in come our quidam and that prelate. The quidam, surly and Saxon—the guest, smooth and Italian; his words softer than butter, yet very swords: that this quidam had 'exceeded the bounds of his commission—launched out into wanton and lawless cruelty—burnt noble ladies unheard, of whose innocence the Holy See had proof—defiled the Catholic faith in the eyes of the weaker sort—and alienated the minds of many nobles and gentlemen'—and finally, that he who thinketh he standeth, were wise to take heed lest he fall.

1st Monk. And what said Conrad?

2d Monk. Out upon a man that cannot keep his lips! Who spake of Conrad? That quidam, however, answered nought, but—how 'to his own master he stood or fell'—

how 'he labored not for the Pope but for the Papacy'; and so forth.

1st Monk. Here is awful doctrine! Behold the fruit of your reformers! This comes of their realized ideas, and centralizations, and organizations, till a monk cannot wink in chapel without being blinded with the lantern, or fall sick on Fridays, for fear of the rod. Have I not testified? Have I not foretold?

2d Monk. Thou hast indeed. Thou knowest that the old paths are best, and livest in most pious abhorrence of all amendment.

1st Monk. Do you hear that shout? There is the procession returning from the tomb.

2d Monk. Hark to the tramp of the horse-hoofs! A gallant show, I'll warrant!

1st Monk. Time was, now, when we were young bloods together in the world, such a roll as that would have set our hearts beating against their cages!

2d Monk. Ay, ay. We have seen sport in our days; we have paraded and curvetted, eh? and heard scabbards jingle? We know the sly touch of the heel, that set him on his hind legs before the right window. Vanitas vanitatum—omnia vanitas! Here comes Gerald, Conrad's chaplain, with our dinner.

GERALD enters across the Court.

1st Monk. A kindly youth and a godly, but—reformation-bitten, like the rest.

2d Monk. Never care. Boys must take the reigning madness in religion, as they do the measles—once for all.

1st Monk. Once too often for him. His face is too, too Like Abel's in the chapel-window. Ut sis vitalis metuo, puer!

Ger. Hail, fathers. I have asked permission of the prior to minister your refection, and bring you thereby the first news of the pageant.

1st Monk. Blessings on thee for a good boy. Give us the trenchers, and open thy mouth while we open ours.

2d Monk. Most splendid all, no doubt?

Ger.

A garden, sir,

Wherein all rainbowed flowers were heaped together ;
A sea of silk and gold, of blazoned banners,
And chargers housed ; such glorious press, be sure,
Thuringen-land ne'er saw.

2d Monk.

Just hear the boy !

Who rode beside the bier ?

Ger.

Frederick the Kaiser,

Henry the Landgrave, brother of her husband ;
The Princesses, too, Agnes, and her mother :
And every noble name, sir, at whose war-cry
The Saxon heart leaps up ; with them the prelates
Of Treves, of Cöln, and Maintz—why name them all ?
When all were there, whom this our fatherland
Counts worthy of its love.

1st Monk.

'Twas but her right.

Who spoke the oration ?

Ger.

Who but Conrad ?

2d Monk.

Well—

That's honor to our house.

1st Monk.

Come, tell us all.

2d Monk. In order, boy : thou hast a ready tongue.

Ger. He raised from off her face the pall, and 'Lo !'
He cried, 'that saintly flesh which ye of late
With sacrilegious hands, ere yet entombed,
Had in your superstitious selfishness
Almost torn piecemeal. Fools ! Gross-hearted fools !
These limbs are God's, not yours : in life for you
They spent themselves ; now till the judgment-day
By virtue of the Spirit embalmed they lie—
Touch them who dare. No ! Would you find your Saint,
Look up, not down, where even now she prays
Beyond that blazing orb for you and me.
Why hither bring her corpse ? Why hide her clay
In jewelled ark beneath God's mercy-seat—
A speck of dust among these boundles aisles,
Uprushing pillars, star-bespangled roofs,
Whose colors mimic Heaven's unmeasured blue,
Save to remind you, how she is not here,
But risen with Him that rose, and by His blaze
Absorbed, lives in the God for whom she died ?
Know her no more according to the flesh ;
Or only so, to brand upon your thoughts

How she was once a woman—flesh and blood,
Like you—yet how unlike ! Hark while I tell ye.

2d Monk. How liked the mob all this? They hate him
sore.

Ger. Half awed, half sullen, till his golden lips
Entranced all ears with tales so sad and strange,
They seemed one life-long miracle : bliss and woe,
Honor and Shame—her daring—Heaven's stern guidance,
Did each the other so outblaze.

1st Monk. Great signs

Did wait on her from youth.

2d Monk. There went a tale
Of one, a Zingar wizard, who, on her birthnight,
He here in Eisenach, she in Presburg lying,
Declared her natal moment, and the glory
Which should befall her by the grace of God,

Ger. He spoke of that, and many a wonder more,
Melting all hearts to worship—how a robe
Which from her shoulders, at a royal feast,
To some importunate as alms she sent,
By miracle within her bower was hung again
And how on her own couch the Incarnate Son
In likeness of a leprous serf, she laid :
And many a wondrous tale till now unheard ;
Which, from her handmaid's oath and attestation,
Siegfried of Maintz to far Perugia sent,
And sainted Umbria's labyrinthine hills,
Even to the holy Council, where the Patriarchs
Of Antioch and Jerusalem, and with them
A host of prelates, magnates, knights, and nobles,
Decreed and canonized her sainthood's palm.

1st Monk. Mass, they could do no less.

Ger. So thought my master-

For 'Thus,' quoth he, 'the primates of the Faith
Have, in the bull which late was read to you,
Most wisely ratified the will of God
Revealed in her life's splendor ; for the next count—
These miracles wherewith since death she shines—
Since ye must have your signs, ere ye believe,
And since without such tests the Roman Father
Allows no saints to take their seats in heaven,
Why, there ye have them ; not a friar, I find,

Or old wife in the streets, but counts some dozens
Of blind, deaf, halt, dumb, palsied, and hysterical,
Made whole at this her tomb. A corpse or two.
Was raised, they say, last week : Will that content you ?
Will that content her ? Earthworms ! Would ye please
the dead,

Bring sinful souls, not limping carcasses
To test her power on ; which of you hath done that ?
Has any glutton learnt from her to fast ?
Or oily burgher dealt away his pelf ?
Has any painted Jezebel in sackcloth
Repented of her vanities ? Your patron ?
Think ye, that spell and flame of intercession ;
Melting God's iron will, which for your sakes
She purchased by long agonies, was but meant
To save your doctors' bills ? If any soul
Hath been by her made holier, let it speak !

2d Monk. Well spoken, Legate ! Easier asked than
answered.

Ger. Not so, for on the moment, from the crowd
Sprang out a gay and gallant gentleman
Well known in fight and tourney, and aloud
With sobs and blushes told, how he long time
Had wallowed deep in mire of fleshly sin,
And loathed, and fell again, and loathed in vain ;
Until the story of her saintly grace
Drew him unto her tomb ; there long prostrate
With bitter cries he sought her, till at length
The image of her perfect loveliness
Transfigured all his soul, and from his knees
He rose new-born, and, since that blessed day,
In chastest chivalry, a spotless knight,
Maintains the widow's and the orphan's cause.

1st Monk. Well done ! and what said Conrad ?

Ger.

Oh, he smiled,

As who should say, ' 'Twas but the news I looked for.'
Then, pointing to the banners borne on high,
Where the sad story of her nightly penance
Was all too truly painted—' Look ! ' he cried,
' 'Twas thus she schooled her soft and shuddering flesh
To dare and suffer for you ! ' Gay ladies sighed,
And stern knights wept, and growled, and wept again.



THE KAISER LAYS THE CROWN ON THE BIER OF ELIZABETH
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And then he told her alms, her mighty labors,
Among God's poor, the schools wherein she taught;
The babes she brought to the font, the hospitals
Founded from her own penury, where she tended
The leper and the fever-stricken serf
With meanest office; how a dying slave
Who craved in vain for milk she stooped to feed
From her own bosom. At that crowning tale
Of utter love, the dullest hearts caught fire
Contagious from his lips—the Spirit's breath
Low to the earth, like dewy-laden corn,
Bowed the ripe harvest of that mighty host;
Knees bent, all heads were bare; rich dames aloud
Bewailed their cushioned sloth; old foes held out
Long parted hands; low murmured vows and prayers
Gained courage, till a shout proclaimed her saint,
And jubilant thunders shook the ringing air,
Till birds dropped stunned, and passing clouds bewept
With crystal drops, like sympathizing angels,
Those wasted limbs, whose sainted ivory round
Shed Eden-odors: from his royal head
The Kaiser took his crown, and on the bier
Laid the rich offering; dames tore off their jewels—
Proud nobles heaped with gold and gems her corse
Whom living they despised: I saw no more—
Mine eyes were blinded with a radiant mist—
And I ran here to tell you.

1st Monk. Oh, fair olive,
Rich with the Spirit's unction, how thy boughs
Rain balsams on us!

2d Monk. Thou didst sell thine all—
And bought'st the priceless pearl!

1st Monk. Thou holocaust of Abel,
By Cain in vain despised!

2d Monk. Thou angels' playmate
Of yore, but now their judge!

Ger. Thou alabaster,
Broken at last, to fill the house of God
With rich celestial fragrance!

[*Etc. etc., ad libitum.*]

SCENE II

A Room in a Convent at Mayence. CONRAD alone.

Con. The work is done ! Diva Elizabeth !
And I have trained one saint before I die !
Yet now 'tis done, is't well done ? On my lips
Is triumph : but what echo in my heart ?
Alas ! the inner voice is sad and dull,
Even at the crown and shout of victory.
Oh ! I had hugged this purpose to my heart,
Cast by for it all ruth, all pride, all scruples ;
Yet now its face, that seemed as pure as crystal,
Shows fleshly, foul, and stained with tears and gore !
We make, and moil, like children in their gardens,
And spoil with dabbled hands, our flowers i' the planting.
And yet a saint is made ! Alas, those children !
Was there no gentler way ? I know not any :
I plucked the gay moth from the spider's web ;
What if my hasty hand have smirched its feathers ?
Sure, if the whole be good, each several part
May for its private blots forgiveness gain,
As in man's tabernacle, vile elements
Unite to one fair stature. Who'll gainsay it ?
The whole is good ; another saint in heaven ;
Another bride within the Bridegroom's arms ;
And she will pray for me !—And yet what matter ?
Better that I, this paltry sinful unit,
Fall fighting, crushed into the nether pit,
If my dead corpse may bridge the path to Heaven,
And damn itself, to save the souls of others.
A noble ruin : yet small comfort in it ;
In it, or in aught else——
A blank dim cloud before mine inward sense
Dulls all the past : she spoke of such a cloud——
I struck her for't, and said it was a fiend——
She's happy now, before the throne of God——
I should be merry ; yet my heart's floor sinks
As on a fast day ; sure some evil bodes.
Would it were here, that I might see its eyes !
The future only is unbearable !
We quail before the rising thunderstorm

Which thrills and whispers in the stifled air
Yet blench not, when it falls. Would it were here !

[*Pause.*]

I fain would sleep, yet dare not : all the air
Throngs thick upon me with the pregnant terror
Of life unseen, yet near. I dare not meet them,
As if I sleep I shall do—I again ?
What matter what I feel, or like, or fear ?
Come what God sends. Within there—Brother Gerard !

GERARD *enters.*

Watch here an hour, and pray.—The fiends are busy.
So—hold my hand. (*Crosses himself.*) Come on, I fear
you not. [*Sleeps.*

GERARD *sings.*

Qui fugiens mundi gravia
Contempsit carnis bravia,
Cupidinisque somnia,
Lucratur, perdens, omnia.

Hunc gestant ulnis angeli,
Ne lapis officiat pedi ;
Ne luce timor occupet,
Aut nocte pestis incubet.

Huic coeli lilia germinant ;
Arrisus sponsi permanent ;
Ac nomen in fidelibus
Quam filiorum medius.

[*Sleeps.*

.

Conrad (awaking). Stay ! Spirits, stay ! Art thou a hell-
born phantasm,
Or word too true, sent by the mother of God ?
Oh, tell me, queen of Heaven !
O God ! if she, the city of the Lord,
Who is the heart, the brain, the ruling soul

Of half the earth ; wherein all kingdoms, laws,
Authority, and faith do culminate,
And draw from her their sanction and their use ;
The lighthouse founded on the rock of ages,
Whereto the Gentiles look, and still are healed ;
The tree whose rootlets drink of every river,
Whose boughs drop Eden fruits on seaward isles ;
Christ's seamless coat, rainbowed with gems and hues
Of all degrees and uses, rend, and tarnish,
And crumble into dust !

Vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas !

Oh ! to have prayed, and toiled—and lied—for this !
For this to have crushed out the heart of youth,
And sat by calm, while living bodies burned !
How ! Gerard ; sleeping !

Couldst thou not watch with me one hour, my son ?

Ger. (awaking). How ! have I slept ? Shame on my
vaporious brain !

And yet there crept along my hand from thine
A leaden languor, and the drowsy air
Teemed thick with humming wings—I slept perforce.
Forgive me (while for breach of holy rule
Due penance shall seem honor) my neglect.

Con. I should have beat thee for't, an hour ago—
Now I judge no man. What are rules and methods ?
I have seen things which make my brain sphere reel :
My magic teraph-bust, full, packed, and labelled,
With saws, ideas, dogmas, ends, and theories,
Lies shivered into dust. Pah ! we do squint
Each through his loophole, and then dream broad heaven
Is but the patch we see. But let none know ;
Be silent, Gerard, wary.

Ger. Nay—I know nought
Of that which moves thee : though I fain would ask——

Con. I saw our mighty Mother, Holy Church,
Sit like a painted harlot : round her limbs
An oily snake had coiled, who smiled, and smiled,
And lisped the name of Jesus—I'll not tell thee :
I have seen more than man can see, and live :
God, when He grants the tree of knowledge, bans
The luckless seer from off the tree of life,
Lest he become as gods, and burst with pride ;

Or sick at sight of his own nothingness,
 Lie down, and be a fiend : my time is near :
 Well—I have neither child, nor kin, nor friend,
 Save thee, my son ; I shall go lightly forth.
 Thou knowest we start for Marpurg on the morrow ?
 Thou wilt go with me ?

Ger. Ay, to death, my master ;
 Yet boorish heretics, with grounded throats,
 Mutter like sullen bulls ; the Count of Saym,
 And many gentlemen, they say, have sworn
 A fearful oath : there's danger in the wind.

Con. They have their quarrel ; I was keen and hasty :
 Gladio qui utitur, peribit gladio.
 When Heaven is strong, then Hell is strong : Thou fear'st
 not ?

Ger. No ! though their name were legion ! 'Tis for thee
 Alone I quake, lest by some pious boldness
 Thou quench the light of Israel.

Con. Light ? my son !
 There shall no light be quenched, when I lie dark.
 Our path trends outward : we will forth to-morrow.
 Now let's to chapel ; matin bells are ringing. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III

*A road between Eisenach and Marpurg. Peasants waiting by
 the roadside. WALTER OF VARILA, the COUNT OF SAYM,
 and other Gentlemen entering on horseback.*

Gent. Talk not of honor—Hell's aflame within me :
 Foul water quenches fire as well as fair ;
 If I do meet him he shall die the death,
 Come fair, come foul : I tell you, there are wrongs
 The fumbling piecemeal law can never touch,
 Which bring of themselves to the injured right divine,
 Straight from the fount of right, above all parchments,
 To be their own avengers : dainty lawyers,
 If one shall slay the adulterer in the act,
 Dare not condemn him : girls have stabbed their tyrants,
 And common sense has crowned them saints ; yet what—
 What were their wrongs to mine ? All gone ! All gone !
 My noble boys, whom I had trained, poor fools,

To win their spurs, and ride afield with me !
 I could have spared them—but my wife ! my lady !
 Those dainty limbs, which no eyes but mine—
 Before that ruffian mob—Too much for man !
 Too much, stern Heaven !—Those eyes, those hands,
 Those tender feet, where I have lain and worshipped—
 Food for fierce flames ! And on the self-same day—
 The day that they were seized— unheard—unargued—
 No witness, but one vile convicted thief—
 The dog is dead and buried : Well done, henchmen !
 They are not buried ! Pah ! their ashes flit
 About the common air, we pass them—breathe them !
 The self-same day ! If I had had one look !
 One word—one single tiny spark of word,
 Such as two swallows change upon the wing !
 She was no heretic : she knelt for ever
 Before the blessed rood, and prayed for me.
 Art sure he comes this road ?

C. Saym.

My messenger

Saw him start forth, and watched him past the crossways.
 An hour will bring him here.

C. Wal.

How ! ambuscading ?

I'll not sit by, while helpless priests are butchered.
 Shame, gentles !

C. Saym.

On my word, I knew not on't
 Until this hour ; my quarrel's not so sharp,
 But I may let him pass : my name is righted
 Before the Emperor, from all his slanders ;
 And what's revenge to me ?

Gent. Ay, ay—forgive and forget—

The vermin's trapped—and we'll be gentle-handed,
 And lift him out, and bid his master speed him,
 Him and his firebrands. He shall never pass me.

C. Wal. I will not see it ; I'm old, and sick of blood.
 She loved him, while she lived ; and charged me once,
 As her sworn liegeman, not to harm the knave.
 I'll home : yet, knights, if aught untoward happen,
 And you should need a shelter, come to me :

My walls are strong. Home, knaves ! we'll seek our wives,
 And beat our swords to ploughshares—when folks let us.

[*Exeunt COUNT WALTER and Suite.*]

C. Saym. He's gone, brave heart !—But—sir, you will
 not dare ?

The Pope's own Legate—think—there's danger in't.

Gent. Look, how athwart yon sullen sleeping flats
That frowning thunder-cloud sails pregnant hither ;—
And black against its sheeted gray, one bird
Flags fearful onward—"Tis his cursed soul !
Now thou shalt quake, raven !—The self-same day !—
He cannot 'scape ! The storm is close upon him !
There ! There ! the wreathing spouts have swallowed him !
He's gone ! and see, the keen blue spark leaps out
From crag to crag, and every vaporous pillar
Shouts forth his death-doom ! 'Tis a sign, a sign !

[*A heretic Preacher mounts a stone. Peasants gather round him.*]

These are the starved unlettered hinds, forsooth,
He hunted down like vermin—for a doctrine.
They have their rights, their wrongs ; their lawless laws.
Their witless arguings, which unconscious reason
Informs to just conclusions. We will hear them.

Preacher. My brethren, I have a message to you : therefore hearken with all your ears—for now is the day of salvation. It is written, that the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light—and truly : for the children of this world, when they are troubled with vermin, catch them—and hear no more of them. But you, the children of light, the elect saints, the poor of this world rich in faith, let the vermin eat your lives out, and then fall down and worship them afterwards. You are all besotted—hag-ridden—drunkards sitting in the stocks, and bowing down to the said stocks, and making a god thereof. Of part, said the prophet, ye make a god, and part serveth to roast—to roast the flesh of your sons and of your daughters ; and then ye cry, 'Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire ;' and a special fire ye have seen ! The ashes of your wives and of your brothers cleave to your clothes,—Cast them up to Heaven, cry aloud, and quit yourselves like men !

Gent. He speaks God's truth ! We are Heaven's justicers ! Our woes anoint us kings ! Peace—Hark again !—

Preacher. Therefore, as said before—in the next place—It is written, that there shall be a two-edged sword in the

hand of the saints. But the saints have but two swords—Was there a sword or shield found among ten thousand in Israel? Then let Israel use his fists, say I, the preacher! For this man hath shed blood, and by man shall his blood be shed. Now behold an argument,—This man hath shed blood, even Conrad; ergo, as he saith himself, ye, if ye are men, shall shed his blood. Doth he not himself say ergo? Hath he not said ergo to the poor saints, to your sons and your daughters, whom he hath burned in the fire to Moloch! ‘Ergo, thou art a heretic’—‘Ergo, thou shalt burn.’ Is he not therefore convicted out of his own mouth? Arise, therefore, be valiant—for this day he is delivered into your hand!

[*Chanting heard in the distance.*]

Peasant. Hush! here the psalm-singers come!

CONRAD *enters on a mule, chanting the Psalter*, GERARD *following.*

Con. My peace with you, my children!

1st Voice. Psalm us no psalms; bless us no devil's blessings:

Your balms will break our heads. [A murmur rises.]

2d Voice. You are welcome, sir; we are a-waiting for you.

3d Voice. Has he been shriven to-day?

4th Voice. Where is your ergo, Master Conrad? Faugh! How both the fellows smell of smoke!

5th Voice. A strange leech he, to suck, and suck, and suck,

And look no fatter for't!

Old Woman. Give me back my sons!

Old Man. Give me back the light of mine eyes, Mine only daughter!

My only one! He hurled her over the cliffs!

Avenge me, lads; you are young!

4th Voice. We will, we will: why smit'st him not, thou with the pole-axe?

3d Voice. Nay, now, the first blow cost most, and heals last;

Besides, the dog's a priest at worst.

C. Saym. Mass ! How the shaveling rascal stands at bay !
There's not a rogue of them dare face his eye !
True Domini canes ! 'Ware the bloodhound's teeth, curs !
Preacher. What ! Are ye afraid ? The huntsman's here at last
Without his whip ! Down with him, craven hounds !
I'll help ye to't. [*Springs from the stone.*]
Gent. Ay, down with him ! Mass, have these yelping boors
More heart than I ? [*Spurs his horse forward.*]
Mob. A knight ! a champion !
Voice. He's not mortal man !
See how his eyes shine ! 'Tis the archangel !
St. Michael come to the rescue ! Ho ! St. Michael !

[*He lunges at CONRAD. GERARD turns the lance aside, and thrown his arms round CONRAD.*]

Ger. My master ! my master ! The chariot of
Israel and the horses thereof !
Oh call down fire from Heaven !

[*A peasant strikes down GERARD. CONRAD, over the body.*]

Alas ! my son ! This blood shall cry for vengeance
Before the throne of God !

Gent. And cry in vain !
Follow thy minion ! Join Folquet in hell !
[*Bears CONRAD down on his lance-point.*]

Con. I am the vicar of the Vicar of Christ :
Who touches me doth touch the Son of God.

[*The mob close over him.*]
O God ! A martyr's crown ! Elizabeth ! [*Dies.*]

NOTES TO ACT I.

THE references, unless it be otherwise specified, are to the *Eight Books concerning Saint Elizabeth by Dietrich the Thuringian*; in Basnage's *Canisius*, Vol. IV. p. 113 (Antwerp, 1725).

Page 21. Cf. Lib. I. § 3. Dietrich is eloquent about her youthful inclination for holy places, and church doors, even when shut, and gives many real proofs of her 'sanctæ indolis,' from the very cradle.

P. 22. 'St. John's sworn maid.' Cf. Lib. I. § 4. 'She chose by lot for her patron, St. John the protector of virginity.'

Ibid. 'Fit for my princess.' Cf. Lib. I. § 2. 'He sent with his daughter vessels of gold, silver baths, jewels, *pillows all of silk*. No such things, so precious or so many, were ever seen in Thuringen-land.'

P. 23. 'Most friendless.' Cf. Lib. I. §§ 5, 6. 'The courtiers used bitterly to insult her, etc. Her mother and sister-in-law, given to worldly pomp, differed from her exceedingly;' and much more concerning 'the persecutions which she endured patiently in youth.'

Ibid. 'In one cradle.' Cf. Lib. I. § 2. 'The princess was laid in the cradle of her boy-spouse,' and, says another, 'the infants embraced with smiles, from whence the bystanders drew a joyful omen of their future happiness.'

Ibid. 'If thou love him.' Cf. Lib. I. § 6. 'The Lord by His hidden inspiration so inclined towards her the heart of the prince, that in the solitude of secret and mutual love he used to speak sweetly to her heart, with kindness and consolation; and was always wont, on returning home, to honor her with presents, and soothe her with embraces.' It was their custom, says Dietrich, to the last to call each other in common conversation 'Brother' and 'Sister.'

P. 24. 'To his charge.' Cf. Lib. I. § 7. 'Walter of Varila, a good man, who, having been sent by the prince's father into Hungary, had brought the blessed Elizabeth into Thuringen-land.'

P. 25. 'The blind archer, Love.' For information about the pagan orientalism of the Troubadours, the blasphemous bombast by which they provoked their persecution in Provence, and their influence on the Courts of Europe, see Simondi, *Lit. Southern Europe*, Cap. III.-VI.

P. 27. 'Stadings.' The Stadings, according to Fleury, in A.D. 1233, were certain unruly fenmen, who refused to pay tithes, committed great cruelties on religious of both sexes, worshipped, or were said to worship, a black cat, etc., considered the devil as a very ill-used personage, and the rightful lord of themselves and the world, and were of the most profligate morals. An impartial and philosophic investigation of this and other early continental heresies is much wanted.

P. 37. 'All gold.' Cf. Lib. I. § 7, for Walter's interference and Lewis's answer, which I have paraphrased.

P. 38. 'Is crowned with thorns.' Cf. Lib. I. § 5, for this anecdote and her defence, which I have in like manner paraphrased.

P. 39. 'Their pardon.' Cf. Lib. I. § 3, for this quaint method of self-humiliation.

Ibid. 'You know your place.' Cf. Lib. I. § 6. 'The vassals and relations of her betrothed persecuted her openly, and plotted to send her back to her father divorced. . . . Sophia also did all she could to place her in a convent. . . . She delighted in the company of maids and servants, so that Sophia used to say sneeringly to her, "You should have been counted among the slaves who drudge, and not among the princes who rule."'

P. 41. 'Childish laughter.' Cf. Lib. I. § 7. 'The holy maiden receiving the mirror, showed her joy by delighted laughter;' and again, II. § 8, 'They loved each other in the charity of the Lord, to a degree beyond all belief.'

Ibid. 'A crystal clear.' Cf. Lib. I. § 7.

P. 43. 'Our fairest bride.' Cf. Lib. I. § 8. 'No one henceforth dared oppose the marriage by word or plot, . . . and all mouths were stopped.'

NOTES TO ACT II.

Pp. 45-49. Cf. Lib. II. §§ 1, 5, 11, *et passim*.

Hitherto my notes have been a careful selection of the few grains of characteristic fact which I could find among Dietrich's lengthy professional reflections; but the chapter on which this scene is founded is remarkable enough to be given whole, and as I have a long-standing friendship for the good old monk, who is full of honest naïveté and deep-hearted sympathy, and have no wish to disgust *all* my readers with him, I shall give it for the most part untranslated. In the meantime those who may be shocked at certain expressions in this poem, borrowed from the Romish devotional school, may verify my language at the Romish booksellers', who find just now a rapidly increasing sale for such ware. And is it not after all a hopeful sign for the age that even the most questionable literary tastes must nowadays ally themselves with religion—that the hotbed imaginations which used to batten on Rousseau and Byron have now risen at least as high as the *Vies des Saints* and St. François de Sales' Philothea? The truth is, that in such a time as this, in the dawn of an age of faith, whose future magnificence we may surely prognosticate from the slowness and complexity of its self-developing process, spiritual 'Werterism,' among other strange prolusions, must have its place. The emotions and the imaginations will assert their just right to be fed—by foul means if not by fair; and even self-torture will have charms after the utter dryness and life-in-death of mere ecclesiastical pedantry. It is good, mournful though it be, that a few, even by gorging themselves with poison, should indicate the rise of a spiritual hunger—if we do but take their fate as a warning to provide wholesome

food before the new craving has extended itself to the many. It is good that religion should have its Werterism, in order that hereafter Werterism may have its religion. But to my quotations—wherein the reader will judge how difficult it has been for me to satisfy at once the delicacy of the English mind and that historic truth which the highest art demands.

‘Erat inter eos honorabile connubium et thorus immaculatus, non in ardore libidinis, sed in conjugalī sanctimonīæ castitate. For the holy maiden, as soon as she was married, began to macerate her flesh with many watchings, rising every night to pray; her husband sometimes sleeping, sometimes conniving at her, often begging her, in compassion to her delicacy, not to afflict herself indiscreetly, often supporting her with his hand when she prayed.’ (‘And,’ says another of her biographers, ‘being taught by her to pray with her.’) ‘Great, truly, was the devotion of this young girl, who, rising from the bed of her carnal husband, sought Christ, whom she loved as the *true husband of her soul*.

‘Nor certainly was there less faith in the husband who did not oppose such and so great a wife, but rather favored her, and tempered her fervor with over-kind prudence. Affected, therefore, by the sweetness of this modest love, and mutual society, they could not bear to be separated for any length of time or distance. The lady, therefore, frequently followed her husband through rough roads, and no small distances, and severe wind and weather, led rather by emotions of sincerity than of carnality: *for the chaste presence of a modest husband offered no obstacle to that devout spouse in the way of praying, watching, or otherwise doing good*.

Then follows the story of her nurse waking Lewis instead of her, and Lewis’s easy good-nature about this, as about every other event of life. ‘And so, after these unwearied watchings, it often happened that, praying for an excessive length of time, she fell asleep on a mat beside her husband’s bed, and being reproved for it by her maidens, answered: “Though I cannot always pray, yet I can do violence to my own flesh by tearing myself in the meantime from my couch.”’

‘Fugiebat oblectamenta carnalia, et ideò stratum molliorem, et viri contubernium secretissimum, quantum licuit, declinavit. Quem quamvis præcordialis amoris affectu deligeret, querulabatur tamen dolens, quod virginalis decorem floris non meruit conservare. Castigabat etiam plagis multis, et lacerabat diris verberibus carnem puella innocens et pudica.

‘In principio quidem diebus quadragesimæ, sextisque feriis aliis occultas solebat accipere disciplinas, lætam coram hominibus se ostentans. Post verò convalescens et proficiens in gratia, deserto dilecti thoro surgens, fecit se in secreto cubiculo per ancillarum manus graviter sæpissime verberari, ad lectumque mariti reversa hilarem se exhibuit et jocundam.

‘Vere felices conjuges, in quorum consortio tanta munditia, in colloquio pudicitia reperta est. In quibus amor Christi concupiscentiam extinxit, devotio refrenavit petulantiam, fervor spiritus excussit somnolentiam, oratio tutavit conscientiam, charitas benefaciendi facultatem tribuit et lætitiā!’

P. 58. ‘In every scruple.’ Cf. Lib. III. § 9, how Lewis ‘consented that Elizabeth his wife should make a vow of obedience and continence at the will of the said Conrad, *salvâ jure matrimonii*,’

P. 56. 'The open street.' Cf. Lib. II. § 11. 'On the Rogation days, when certain persons doing contrary to the decrees of the saints are decorated with precious and luxurious garments, the Princess, dressed in serge and barefooted, used to follow most devoutly the Procession of the Cross and the relics of the Saints, and place herself always at sermon among the poorest women ; knowing (says Dietrich) that seeds cast into the valleys spring up into the richest crop of corn.'

P. 56. 'The poor of Christ.' Cf. Lib. II. §§ 6, 11, *et passim*. Elizabeth's labors among the poor are too well known throughout one half at least of Christendom, where she is, *par excellence*, the patron of the poor, to need quotations.

P. 58. 'I'll be thy pupil.' Cf. Lib. II. § 4. 'She used also, by words and examples, to oblige the worldly ladies who came to her to give up the vanity of the world, at least in some one particular.'

P. 59. 'Conrad enters.' Cf. Lib. III. §, 9, where this story of the disobeyed message and the punishment inflicted by Conrad for it is told word for word.

P. 62. 'Peaceably come by.' Cf. Lib. II. § 6.

P. 62. 'Bond slaves.' Cf. Note 11.

P. 65. 'Elizabeth passes.' Cf. Lib. II. § 5. 'This most Christian mother, impletis *purgationis sue* diebus, used to dress herself in serge, and, taking in her arms her new-born child, used to go forth secretly, barefooted, by the difficult descent from the castle, by a rough and rocky road to a remote church, carrying her infant in her own arms, after the example of the Virgin Mother, and offering him upon the altar to the Lord with a taper (and with gold says another biographer).

P. 66. 'Give us bread.' Cf. Lib. III. § 6. 'A. D. 1225, while the Landgrave was gone to Italy to the Emperor, a severe famine arose throughout all Almaine ; and lasting for nearly two years, destroyed many with hunger. Then Elizabeth, moved with compassion for the miserable, collected all the corn from her granaries, and distributed it as alms for the poor. She also built a hospital at the foot of the Wartburg, wherein she placed all those who could not wait for the general distribution. . . . She sold her own ornaments to feed the members of Christ. . . . Cuidam misero lac desideranti, ad mulgendum se præbuit !' —See p. 153.

P. 74. 'Ladies' tenderness.' Cf. Lib. III. § 8. 'When the courtiers and stewards complained on his return of the Lady Elizabeth's too great extravagance in almsgiving, "Let her alone," quoth he, "to do good, and to give whatever she will for God's sake, only keep Wartburg and Neuenberg in my hands."'

P. 81. 'A crusader's cross.' Cf. Lib. IV. § 1. 'In the year 1227 there was a general "Passagium" to the Holy Land, in which Frederick the Emperor also crossed the seas' (or rather did *not* cross the seas, says Heinrich Stero, in his annals, but having got as far as Sicily, came back again—miserably disappointing and breaking up the expedition, whereof the greater part died at the various ports—and was excommunicated for so doing) ; 'and Lewis, landgrave of the Thuringians, took the cross likewise in the name of Jesus Christ, and . . . did not immediately fix the badge which he had received to his garment, as the matter is, lest

his wife, who loved him with the most tender affection, seeing this, should be anxious and disturbed, . . . but she found it while turning over his purse, and fainted, struck down with a wonderful consternation.'

P. 83. 'I must be gone.' Cf. Lib. IV. § 2. A chapter in which Dietrich rises into a truly noble and pathetic strain. 'Coming to Schmalcald,' he says, 'Lewis found his dearest friends, whom he had ordered to meet him there, not wishing to depart without taking leave of them.'

Then follows Dietrich's only poetic attempt, which Basnage calls a '*carmen ineptum*, foolish ballad,' and most unfairly, as all readers should say, if I had any hope of doing justice in a translation to this genial fragment of an old dramatic ballad, and its simple objectivity, as of a writer so impressed (like all true Teutonic poets in those earnest days) with the pathos and greatness of his subject that he never tries to 'improve' it by reflections and preaching at his readers, but thinks it enough just to tell his story, sure that it will speak for itself to all hearts:—

Quibus valefaciens cum mœrore
 Commisit suis fratribus natos cum uxore :
 Matremque deosculatos filiali more,
Vix eam alloquitur cordis præ dolore,
 Illis mota viscera, corda tremuerunt,
 Dum alter in alterius colla irruerunt,
Expetentes oscula quæ vix receperunt
Propter multitudines, quæ eos compresserunt.
Mater tenens filium, uxorque maritum,
In diversa pertrahunt, et tenent invitum,
 Fratres cum militibus velut compeditum
 Stringunt nec discedere sinunt expeditum.
 Erat in exercitu maximus tumultus,
 Cum carorum cernerent alternari vultus.
 Flebant omnes pariter, senex et adultus,
 Turbæ cum militibus, cultus et incultus.
Eja ! Quis non plangeret, cum videret flentes
Tot honestos nobiles, tam diversas gentes,
 Cum Thuringis Saxones illuc venientes,
 Ut viderent socios suos abscedentes.
 Amico luctamine cuncti certavere,
 Quis eum diutius posset retinere ;
Quidam collo brachiis, quidam inhæsere
Vestibus, nec poterat cuiquam respondere.
 Tandem se de manibus eximens suorum
 Magnatorum socius et peregrinorum
Admixtus tandem cætui cruce signatorum
Non visurus amplius terram Thuringorum !

Surely there is a heart of flesh in the old monk which, when warmed by a really healthy subject, can toss aside scripture parodies and professional stoic sentiment, and describe with such life and pathos, like any eye-witness, a scene which occurred, in fact, two years before his birth.

'And thus this *Prince of Peace*,' he continues, 'mounting his horse

with many knights, etc. . . . about the end of the month of June, set forth in the name of the Lord, praising him in heart and voice, and weeping and singing were heard side by side. And close by followed, with saddest heart, that most faithful lady after her sweetest prince, her most loving spouse, never, alas! to behold him more. And when she was going to return, the force of love and the agony of separation forced her on with him one day's journey : and yet that did not suffice. She went on, still unable to bear the parting, another full day's journey. . . At last they part, at the exhortations of Rudolph the Cupbearer. What groans, think you, what sobs, what struggles, and yearnings of the heart must there have been? Yet they part, and go on their way. . . . The lord went forth exulting, as a giant to run his course ; the lady returned lamenting, as a widow, and tears were on her cheeks. Then putting off the garments of joy, she took the dress of widowhood. The mistress of nations, sitting alone, she turned herself utterly to God—to her former good works, adding better ones.

Their children were 'Hermann, who became Landgraf; a daughter who married the Duke of Brabant; another, who, remaining in virginity, became a nun of Aldenburg, of which place she is Lady Abbess until this day.

NOTES TO ACT III.

P. 87. 'On the freezing stone.' Cf. Lib. II. § 5. 'In the absence of her husband she used to lay aside her gay garments, conducted herself devoutly as a widow, and waited for the return of her beloved, passing her nights in watchings, genuflexions, prayers and disciplines. And again, Lib. IV. § 3, just quoted.

P. 88. 'The will of God.' Cf. Lib. IV. § 6. 'The mother-in-law said to her daughter-in-law, "Be brave, my beloved daughter; nor be disturbed at that which hath happened by divine ordinance to thy husband, my son." Whereto she answered boldly, "If my brother is captive, he can be freed by the help of God and our friends." "He is dead," quoth the other. Then she, clasping her hands upon her knees, "The world is dead to me, and all that is pleasant in the world." Having said this, suddenly springing up with tears, she rushed swiftly through the whole length of the palace, and being entirely beside herself, would have run on to the world's end, *usque quâque*, if a wall had not stopped her; and others coming up, led her away from the wall to which she had clung.

P. 89. 'Yon lion's rage.' Cf. Lib. III. § 2. 'There was a certain lion in the court of the Prince; and it came to pass on a time that rising from his bed in the morning, and crossing the court dressed only in his gown and slippers, he met this lion loose and raging against him. He thereon threatened the beast with his raised fist, and rated it manfully, till laying aside its fierceness, it lay down at the knight's feet, and fawned on him, wagging its tail.' So Dietrich.

Pp. 91-93, 95-100. Cf. Lib. IV. § 7.

'Now shortly after the news of Lewis's death, certain vassals of her late husband (with Henry, her brother-in-law) cast her out of the

castle and of all her possessions. . . . She took refuge that night in a certain tavern, . . . and went at midnight to the matins of the "Minor Brothers." . . . And when no one dare give her lodging, took refuge in the church. . . . And when her little ones were brought to her from the castle, amid most bitter frost, she knew not where to lay their heads. . . . She entered a priest's house, and fed her family miserably enough, by pawning what she had. There was in that town an enemy of hers, having a roomy house. . . . Whither she entered at his bidding, and was forced to dwell with her whole family in a very narrow space, . . . her host and hostess heaped her with annoyances and spite. She therefore bid them farewell, saying, "I would willingly thank mankind if they would give me any reason for so doing." So she returned to her former filthy cell.'

P. 92. 'White whales' bone (*i. e.* the tooth of the narwhal); a common simile in the older poets.

P. 96. 'The nuns of Kitzingen.' Cf. Lib. V. § 1. 'After this, the noble lady the Abbess of Kitzingen, Elizabeth's aunt according to the flesh, brought her away honorably to Eckembert, Lord Bishop of Bamberg.'

P. 98. 'Aged crone.' Cf. Lib. IV. § 8, where this whole story is related word for word.

P. 101. 'I'd mar this face.' Cf. Lib. V. § 1. 'If I could not,' said she, 'escape by any other means, I would with my own hands cut off my nose, that so every man might loathe me when so foully disfigured.'

P. 102. 'Botenstein.' Cf. *ibid.* 'The bishop commanded that she should be taken to Botenstein with her maids, until he should give her away in marriage.'

Ibid. 'Bear children.' *Ibid.* 'The venerable man, knowing that the Apostle says, "I will that the younger widows marry and bear children," thought of giving her in marriage to some one—an intention which she perceived, and protested on the strength of her "votum continentię."'

P. 104. 'The tented field.' All records of the worthy bishop on which I have fallen, describe him as 'virum militiâ strenuissimum,' a mighty man of war. We read of him, in Stero of Altaich's Chronicle, A.D. 1232, making war on the Duke of Carinthia, destroying many of his castles, and laying waste a great part of his land; and next year, being seized by some bailiff of the Duke's, and keeping that Lent in durance vile. In A.D. 1237 he was left by the Emperor as 'vir magnanimus et bellicosus,' in charge of Austria, during the troubles with Duke Frederick; and died in 1240.

P. 106. 'Lewis's bones.' Cf. Lib. V. § 3.

P. 109. 'I thank thee.' Cf. Lib. V. § 4. 'What agony and love there was then in her heart, He alone can tell who knows the hearts of all the sons of men. I believe that her grief was renewed, and all her bones trembled, when she saw the bones of her beloved separated one from another (the corpse had been dug up at Otranto, and *boiled*). But though absorbed in so great a woe, at last she remembered God, and recovering her spirit said '—(Her words I have paraphrased as closely as possible).

Ibid. 'The close hard by.' Cf. Lib. V. § 4.

NOTES TO ACT IV.

P. 110. 'Your self-imposed vows.' Cf. Lib. IV. § I 'On Good Friday, when the altars were exhibited bare in remembrance of the Saviour who hung bare on the cross for us, she went into a certain chapel, and in the presence of Master Conrad, and certain Franciscan brothers, laying her holy hands on the bare altar, renounced her own will, her parents, children, relations, "et omnibus hujus modi pompis," all pomps of this kind (a misprint, one hopes, for mundi), in imitation of Christ; and "ominò se exuit et nudavit," stripped herself utterly naked, to follow Him naked in the steps of poverty.'

P. 113. 'All worldly goods.' A paraphrase of her own words.

Ibid. 'Thine own needs.' But when she was going to renounce her possessions also, the prudent Conrad stopped her.' The reflections which follow are Dietrich's own.

P. 114. 'The likeness of the fiend,' etc. I have put this daring expression into Conrad's mouth, as the ideal outcome of the teaching of Conrad's age on this point—and of much teaching also which miscalls itself Protestant in our own age. The doctrine is not, of course, to be found *totidem verbis* in the formularies of any sect—yet almost all sects preach it, and quote Scripture for it as boldly as Conrad—the Romish Saint alone carries it honestly out into practice.

P. 115. 'With pine boughs.' Cf. Lib. VI. § 2. 'Entering a certain desolate court, she betook herself, "sub gradu cujusdam caminatae," to the projection of a certain furnace, where she roofed herself in with boughs. . . . In the meantime, in the town of Marpurg, was built for her a humble cottage of clay and timber.'

P. 116. 'Count Pama.' Cf. Lib. VI. § 6.

P. 117. 'Isentrudis and Guta.' Cf. Lib. VII. § 4. 'Now Conrad, as a prudent man, perceiving that this disciple of Christ wished to arrive at the highest pitch of perfection, studied to remove all which he thought would retard her, . . . and therefore drove from her all those of her former household in whom she used to solace or delight herself. Thus the holy priest deprived this servant of God of all society, that so the constancy of her obedience might become known, and occasion might be given to her for clinging to God alone.'

Ibid. 'A leprous boy.' Cf. Lib. VI. § 8.

She had several of these protégés, successively, whose diseases are too disgusting to be specified, on whom she lavished the most menial cares. All the other stories of her benevolence which occur in these two pages are related by Dietrich.

Ibid. 'Mighty to save.' Cf. Lib. VII. § 7. Where we read amongst other matters, how the objects of her prayers used to become while she was speaking so intensely *hot*, that they not only smoked, and nearly melted, but burnt the fingers of those who touched them: from whence Dietrich bids us 'learn with what an ardor of charity she used to burn, who would dry up with her heat the flow of worldly desire, and inflame to the love of eternity.'

P. 119. 'Lands and titles.' Cf. Lib. V. §§ 7, 8.

P. 120. 'Spinning wool.' Cf. Lib. VI. § 6. 'And crossing himself

for wonder, the Count Pama cried out and said, "Was it ever seen to this day that a king's daughter should spin wool?" All his messages from her father (says Dietrich) were of no avail.'

P. 124. 'To do her penance.' Cf. Lib. VII. § 4. 'Now he had placed with her certain austere women, from whom she endured much oppression patiently for Christ's sake, who, watching her rigidly, frequently reported her to her master for having transgressed her obedience in giving something to the poor, or begging others to give. And when thus accused she often received many blows from her master, insomuch that he used to strike her in the face, which she earnestly desired to endure patiently in memory of the stripes of the Lord.'

P. 125. 'That she dared not.' Cf. Lib. VII. § 4. 'When her most intimate friends, Isentrudis and Guta' whom another account describes as in great poverty), 'came to see her, she dared not give them anything, even for food, nor, without special license, salute them.'

Ibid. 'To bear within us.' Seeing in the church of certain monks who "professed poverty" images sumptuously gilt, she said to about twenty-four of them, "You had better to have spent this money on your own food and clothes, for we ought to have the reality of these images written in our hearts." And if anyone mentioned a beautiful image before her she used to say, "I have no need of such an image. I carry the thing itself in my bosom,"'

P. 126. 'Even on her bed.' Cf. Lib. VI. §§ 5, 6.

P. 127. 'My mother rose.' Cf. Lib. VI. § 8. 'Her mother, who had been long ago' (when Elizabeth was nine years old) 'miserably slain by the Hungarians, appeared to her in her dreams upon her knees, and said, "My beloved child! pray for the agonies which I suffer; for thou canst." Elizabeth waking, prayed earnestly, and falling asleep again, her mother appeared to her and told her that she was freed, and that Elizabeth's prayers would hereafter benefit all who invoked her.' Of the causes of her mother's murder the less that is said the better, but the prudent letter which the bishop of Gran sent back when asked to join in the conspiracy against her is worthy notice. '*Reginam occidere nolite timere bonum est. Si omnes consentiunt ego non contradico.*' To be read as a full consent, or as a flat refusal, according to the success of the plot.

P. 128. 'Any living soul.' Dietrich has much on this point, headed, 'How Master Conrad exercised Saint Elizabeth in the breaking of her own will. . . . And at last forbade her entirely to give alms; whereon she employed herself in washing lepers and other infirm folk. In the meantime she was languishing, and inwardly tortured with emotions of compassion.'

I may here say that in representing Elizabeth's early death as accelerated by a 'broken heart' I have, I believe, told the truth, though I find no hint of anything of the kind in Dietrich. The religious public of a petty town in the thirteenth century round the deathbed of a royal saint would of course treasure up most carefully all incidents connected with her latter days; but they would hardly record sentiments or expressions which might seem to their notions to derogate in any way from her saintship. Dietrich, too, looking at the subject as a monk and not as a man, would consider it just as much his duty to make her death-scene raptur-

ous as to make both her life and her tomb miraculous. I have composed these last scenes in the belief that Elizabeth and all her compeers will be recognized as real saints, in proportion as they are felt to have been real men and women.

P. 130. 'Eructate sweet doctrine.' The expressions are Dietrich's own.

Ibid. 'In her coffin yet.' Cf. Lib. VIII. § 1

Ibid. 'So she said.' Cf. *Ibid.*

Ibid. 'The poor of Christ.' She begged her master to distribute all to the poor, except a worthless tunic in which she wished to be buried. She made no will: she would have no heir beside Christ' (*i.e.* the poor).

P. 131. 'Martha and their brother,' etc.

I have compressed the events of several days into one in this scene. I give Dietrich's own account, omitting his reflections.

'When she had been ill twelve days and more one of her maids sitting by her bed heard in her throat a very sweet sound, . . . and saying, "Oh, my mistress, how sweetly thou didst sing!" she answered, "I tell thee, I heard a little bird between me and the wall sing merrily; who with his sweet song so stirred me up that I could not but sing myself."'

Again, § 3. 'The last day she remained till evening most devout, having been made partaker of the celestial table, and inebriated with that most pure blood of life, which is Christ. The word of truth was continually on her lips, and opening her mouth of wisdom, she spake of the best things, which she had heard in sermons; eructating from her heart good words, and the law of clemency was heard on her tongue. She told from the abundance of her heart how the Lord Jesus condescended to console Mary and Martha at the raising again of their brother Lazarus, and then, speaking of His weeping with them over the dead, she eructated the memory of the abundance of the Lord's sweetness, *affectu et effectu* (in feeling and expression?). Certain religious persons who were present, hearing these words, fired with devotion by the grace which filled her lips, melted into tears. To whom the saint of God, now dying, recalled the sweet words of her Lord as He went to death, saying, "Daughters of Jerusalem," etc. Having said this she was silent. A wonderful thing. Then most sweet voices were heard in her throat, without any motion of her lips; and she asked of those round, "Did ye not hear some singing with me?" "Whereon none of the faithful are allowed to doubt," says Dietrich, "when she herself heard the harmony of the heavenly hosts," etc. etc. . . . From that time till twilight she lay, as if exultant and jubilant, showing signs of remarkable devotion, till the crowing of the cock. Then, as if secure in the Lord, she said to the bystanders, "What should we do if the fiend showed himself to us?" And shortly afterwards, with a loud and clear voice, "Fly! fly!" as if repelling the dæmon.'

'At the cock-crow she said, "Here is the hour in which the Virgin brought forth her child Jesus and laid him in a manger." . . . Let us talk of Ilim, and of that new star which he created by his omnipotence, which never before was seen." "For these" (says Montanus in her name) "are the venerable mysteries of our faith, our richest blessings,

our fairest ornaments : in these all the reason of our hope flourishes, faith grows, charity burns.”

The novelty of the style and matter will, I hope, excuse its prolixity with most readers. If not, I have still my reasons for inserting the greater part of this chapter.

P. 133. ‘I demand it.’ How far I am justified in putting such fears into her mouth the reader may judge. Cf. Lib. VIII. § 5. ‘The devotion of the people demanding it, her body was left unburied till the fourth day in the midst of a multitude.’ . . .

“The flesh,” says Dietrich, ‘had the tenderness of a living body, and was easily moved hither and thither at the will of those who handled it. . . . And many, sublime in the valor of their faith, tore off the hair of her head and the nails of her fingers (“even the tips of her ears, *et mamillarum papillas*,” says untranslatably Montanus of Spire), and kept them as relics.’ The reference relating to the pictures of her disciplines and the effect which they produced on the crowd I have unfortunately lost.

Ibid. ‘And yet no pain.’ Cf. Lib. VIII. § 4. ‘She said, “Though I am weak I feel no disease or pain,” and so through that whole day and night, as hath been said, having been elevated with most holy affections of mind towards God, and inflamed in spirit with most divine utterances and conversations, at length she rested from jubilating, and inclining her head as if falling into a sweet sleep, expired.’

NOTES TO ACT V.

P. 135. ‘Canonization.’ Cf. Lib. VIII. § 10. If I have in the last scene been guilty of a small anachronism, I have in this been guilty of a great one. Conrad was of course a prime means of Elizabeth’s canonization, and, as Dietrich and his own ‘Letter to Pope Gregory the Ninth’ show, collected, and pressed on the notice of the Archbishop of Mainz, the miraculous statements necessary for that honor. But he died two years before the actual publication of her canonization. It appeared to me that by following the exact facts I must either lose sight of the final triumph, which connects my heroine forever with Germany and all Romish Christendom, and is the very culmination of the whole story, or relinquish my only opportunity of doing Conrad justice, by exhibiting the remaining side of his character.

I am afraid that I have erred, and that the most strict historic truth would have coincided, as usual, with the highest artistic effect, while it would only have corroborated the moral of my poem, supposing that there is one. But I was fettered by the poverty of my own imagination, and ‘do manus lectoribus.’

Ibid. ‘Third Minors.’ The order of the Third Minors of St. Francis of Assisi was an invention of the comprehensive mind of that truly great man, by which ‘worldlings’ were enabled to participate in the spiritual advantages of the Franciscan rule and discipline without neglect or suspension of their civic and family duties. But it was an institution too enlightened for its age ; and family and civilities were destined for a far nobler consecration. The order was persecuted and all but exterminated

by the jealousy of the Regular Monks, not, it seems, without papal connivance. Within a few years after its foundation it numbered amongst its members the noblest knights and ladies of Christendom, St. Louis of France among the number.

P. 136. 'Lest he fall.' Cf. Fleury, *Eccl. Annals*, in Anno 1233. 'Doctor Conrad of Marburg, the King Henry, son of the Emperor Frederick, etc., called an Assembly at Mayence to examine persons accused as heretics. Among whom the Count of Saym demanded a delay to justify himself. As for the others who did not appear, Conrad gave the cross to those who would take up arms against them. At which these supposed heretics were so irritated, that on his return they lay in wait for him near Marburg, and killed him, with brother Gerard, of the order of Minors, a holy man. Conrad was accused of precipitation in his judgments, and of having burned *trop légèrement* under pretext of heresy, many noble and not noble, monks, nuns, burghers, and peasants. For he had them executed the same day that they were accused, without allowing any appeal.'

P. 147. 'The Kaiser.' Cf. Lib. VIII. § 12, for a list of the worthies present.

P. 139. 'A Zingar wizard.' Cf. Lib. I. § 1. The Magician's name was Klingsohr. He has been introduced by Novalis into his novel of *Heinrich Von Ofterdingen*, as present at the famous contest of the Minnesingers on the Wartburg. Here is Dietrich's account :—

'There were in those days in the Landgrave's court six knights, nobles, etc. etc., "cantilenarum confectores summi," song-wrights of the highest excellence' (either one of them or Klingsohr himself was the author of the Nibelungen-lied and the Heldenbuch).

'Now there dwelt then in the parts of Hungary, in the land which is called the "Seven Castles," a certain rich nobleman, worth 3000 marks a year, a philosopher, practised from his youth in secular literature, but nevertheless learned in the sciences of Necromancy and Astronomy. This master Klingsohr was sent for by the Prince to judge between the songs of these knights aforesaid. Who, before he was introduced to the Landgrave, sitting one night in Eisenach, in the court of his lodging, looked very earnestly upon the stars, and being asked if he had perceived any secrets, "Know that this night is born a daughter to the King of Hungary, who shall be called Elizabeth, and shall be a saint, and shall be given to wife to the son of this prince, in the fame of whose sanctity all the earth shall exult and be exalted."

'See!—He who by Balaam the wizard foretold the mystery of his own incarnation, himself foretold by this wizard the name and birth of his fore-chosen handmaid Elizabeth.' (A comparison, of which Basnage says, that he cannot deny it to be intolerable.) I am not bound to explain all strange stories, but considering who and whence Klingsohr was, and the fact that the treaty of espousals took place two months afterwards, 'adhuc sugens ubera desponsata est,' it is not impossible that King Andrew and his sage vassal may have had some previous conversation on the destination of the unborn princess.

Ibid. 'A robe.' Cf. Lib. II. § 9, for this story, on which Dietrich observes, 'Thus did her Heavenly Father clothe his lily Elizabeth, as Solomon in all his glory could not do.'

P. 139. 'The Incarnate Son.' This story is told, I think, by Surias, and has been introduced with an illustration by a German artist of the highest note, into a modern prose biography of this saint. (I have omitted much more of the same kind.)

Ibid. 'Sainthood's palm.' Cf. Lib. VIII. §§ 7, 8, 9 'While to declare the merits of his handmaid Elizabeth, in the place where her body rested, Almighty God was thus multiplying the badges of her virtues (*i.e.* miracles), two altars were built in her praise in that chapel, which while Siegfried, Archbishop of Mayence, was consecrating, as he had evidently been commanded in a vision, at the prayers of that devout man master Conrad, preacher of the word of God; the said preacher commanded all who had received any grace of healing from the merits of Elizabeth, to appear next day before the Archbishop and faithfully prove their assertions by witnesses. . . . Then the Most Holy Father, Pope Gregory the ninth, having made diligent examination of the miracles transmitted to him, trusting at the same time to mature and prudent counsels, and the Holy Spirit's providence, above all, so ordaining, his clemency disposing, and his grace admonishing, decreed that the Blessed Elizabeth, was to be written among the catalogue of the saints on earth, since in heaven she rejoices as written in the Book of Life.' . . .

Then follow four chapters, headed severally—

§ 9. 'Of the solemn canonization of the Blessed Elizabeth.'

§ 10. 'Of the translation of the Blessed Elizabeth (and how the corpse when exposed diffused round a miraculous fragrance).'

§ 11. 'Of the desire of the people to see, embrace, and kiss (says Dietrich) those sacred bones, the organs of the Holy Spirit, from which flowed so many graces of sanctities.'

§ 12. 'Of the sublime persons who were present, and their oblations.'

§ 13. 'A consideration of the divine mercy about this matter.'

'Behold! she who despised the glory of the world, and refused the company of magnates, is magnificently honored by the dignity of the Pontifical office, and the reverent care of Imperial Majesty. And she who, seeking the lowest place in this life, sat on the ground, slept in the dust, is now raised on high, by the hands of Kings and Princes. . . . It transcends all heights of temporal glory, to have been made like the saints in glory. For all the rich among the people "vultum ejus deprecantur" (pray for the light of her countenance), and kings and princes offer gifts, magnates adore her, and all nations serve her. Nor without reason, for "she sold all and gave to the poor," and counting all her substance for nothing, bought for herself this priceless pearl of eternity.' One would be sorry to believe that such utterly mean considerations of selfish vanity, expressing as they do an extreme respect for the very pomps and vanities which they praise the saints for despising, really went to the making of any saint, Romish or other.

§ 14. 'Of the sacred oil which flowed from the bones of Elizabeth,' I subjoin the 'Epilogus.'

'Moreover even as the elect handmaid of God, the most blessed Elizabeth, had shone during her life with wonderful signs of her virtues, so since the day of her blessed departure up to the present time, she is

resplendent through the various quarters of the world with illustrious prodigies of miracles, the Divine power glorifying her. For to the blind, dumb, deaf, and lame, dropsical, possessed, and leprous, shipwrecked, and captives, "ipsius meritis," as a reward for her holy deeds, remedies are conferred. Also, to all diseases, necessities, and dangers, assistance is given. And, moreover, by the many corpses, "*puta sedecim*," say sixteen, wonderfully raised to life by herself, becomes known to the faithful the magnificence of the virtues of the Most High glorifying His saint. To that Most High be glory and honor for ever. Amen.'

So ends Dietrich's story. The reader has by this time, I hope, read enough to justify, in every sense, Conrad's 'A corpse or two was raised, they say, last week,' and much more of the funeral oration which I have put into his mouth.

P. 140. 'Gallant gentlemen.' Cf. Lib. VIII. § 6.

P. 141. 'Took his crown,' Cf. Lib. VIII. § 12.

Ibid. The 'olive' and the 'pearl' are Dietrich's own figures. The others follow the method of scriptural interpretation, usual in the writers of that age.

P. 149 'Domini canes,' 'The Lord's hounds,' a punning sobriquet of the Dominican inquisitors, in allusion to their profession.

Ibid. 'Folquet,' Bishop of Toulouse, who had been in early life a Troubadour, distinguished himself by his ferocity and perfidy in the crusade against the Albigenses and Troubadours, especially at the surrender of Toulouse, in company with his chief abettor, the infamous Simon de Montford. He died A. D. 1231.—See Sismondi, *Lit. of Southern Europe*, Cap. VI.

ANDROMEDA.

ANDROMEDA

OVER the sea, past Crete, on the Syrian shore to the south-
ward,
Dwells in the well-tilled lowland a dark-haired Æthiop
people,
Skilful with needle and loom, and the arts of the dyer and
carver,
Skilful, but feeble of heart ; for they know not the lords of
Olympus,
Lovers of men ; neither broad-browed Zeus, nor Pallas
Athené,
Teacher of wisdom to heroes, bestower of might in the
battle ;
Share not the cunning of Hermes, nor list to the songs of
Apollo.
Fearing the stars of the sky, and the roll of the blue salt
water,
Fearing all things that have life in the womb of the seas
and the rivers,
Eating no fish to this day, nor ploughing the main, like the
Phœnics,
Manful with black-beaked ships, they abide in a sorrowful
region,
Vexed with the earthquake, and flame, and the sea-
floods, scourge of Poseidon.
Whelming the dwellings of men, and the toils of
the slow-footed oxen,
Drowning the barley and flax, and the hard-earned gold of
the harvest,
Up to the hillside vines, and the pastures skirting the wood-
land,
Inland the floods came yearly ; and after the waters a
monster,
Bred of the slime, like the worms which are bred from the
slime of the Nile-bank,

Shapeless, a terror to see ; and by night it swam out to the seaward,

Daily returning to feed with the dawn, and devoured of the fairest.

Cattle, and children, and maids, till the terrified people fled inland.

Fasting in sackcloth and ashes they came, both the king and his people,

Came to the mountain of oaks, to the house of the terrible sea-gods,

Hard by the gulf in the rocks, where of old the world-wide deluge

Sank to the inner abyss ; and the lake where the fish of the goddess,

Holy, undying, abide ; whom the priests feed daily with dainties.

There to the mystical fish, high-throned in her chamber of cedar,

Burnt they the fat of the flock ; till the flame shone far to the seaward.

Three days fasting they prayed ; but the fourth day the priests of the goddess,

Cunning in spells, cast lots, to discover the crime of the people.

All day long they cast, till the house of the monarch was taken,

Cepheus, king of the land ; and the faces of all gathered blackness.

Then once more they cast ; and Cassiopœia was taken, Deep-bosomed wife of the king, whom oft far-seeing Apollo

Watched well-pleased from the welkin, the fairest of Æthiop women :

Fairest, save only her daughter ; for down to the ankle he tresses

Rolled, blue-black as the night, ambrosial, joy to beholders.

Awful and fair she arose, most like in her coming to Here, Queen before whom the Immortals arise, as she comes on

Olympus,

Out of the chamber of gold, which her son Hephæstos has wrought her.

Such in her stature and eyes, and the broad white light of her forehead.

Stately she came from her place, and she spoke in the midst of the people.

‘Pure are my hands from blood : most pure this heart in my bosom.

Yet one fault I remember this day ; one word have I spoken ;

Rashly I spoke on the shore, and I dread lest the sea should have heard it.

Watching my child at her bath, as she plunged in the joy of her girlhood,

Fairer I called her in pride than Atergati, queen of the ocean,

Judge ye if this be my sin, for I know none other.’ She ended ;

Wrapping her head in her mantle she stood, and the people were silent.

Answered the dark-browed priests, ‘No word, once spoken, returneth,

Even if uttered unwitting. Shall gods excuse our rashness ?

That which is done, that abides ; and the wrath of the sea is against us ;

Hers, and the wrath of her brother, the Sun-god, lord of the sheepfolds.

Fairer than her hast thou boasted thy daughter ? Ah folly ! for hateful,

Hateful are they to the gods, whoso, impious, liken a mortal,

Fair though he be, to their glory ; and hateful is that which is likened,

Grieving the eyes of their pride, and abominate, doomed to their anger.

What shall be likened to gods ? The unknown, who deep in the darkness

Ever abide, twyformed, many-handed, terrible, shapeless.

Woe to the queen ; for the land is defiled, and the people accursed.

Take thou her therefore by night, thou ill-starred Casiopœia,

Take her with us in the night, when the moon sinks low to the westward ;

Blind her aloft for a victim, a prey for the gorge of the [monster,

Far on the sea-girt rock, which is washed by the surges forever ;

So may the goddess accept her, and so may the land make atonement.

Purged by her blood from its sin : so obey thou the doom of the rulers.'

Bitter in soul they went out, Cepheus and Cassiopœia,
Bitter in soul ; and their hearts whirled round, as the leaves in the eddy.

Weak was the queen, and rebelled : but the king, like a shepherd of people,

Willed not the land should waste ; so he yielded the life of his daughter.

Deep in the wane of the night, as the moon sank low to the westward,

They by the shade of the cliffs, with the horror of darkness around them,

Stole, as ashamed, to a deed which became not the light of the sunshine,

Slowly, the priests, and the queen, and the virgin bound in the galley,

Slowly they rowed to the rocks : but Cepheus far in the palace

Sate in the midst of the hall, on his throne, like a shepherd of people,

Choking his woe, dry-eyed, while the slaves wailed loudly round him.

They on the sea-girt rock, which is washed by the surges forever,

Set her in silence, the guiltless, aloft with her face to the eastward.

Under a crag of the stone, where a ledge sloped down to the water ;

There they set Andromeden, most beautiful, shaped like a goddess,

Lifting her long white arms wide-spread to the walls of the basalt,

Chaining them, ruthless, with brass ; and they called on the might of the Rulers.

' Mystical fish of the seas, dread Queen whom Æthiops honor,

Whelming the land in thy wrath, unavoidable, sharp as [the sting-ray,

Thou, and thy brother the Sun, brain-smiting, lord of the
sheepfold,
Scorching the earth all day, and then resting at night in
thy bosom,
Take ye this one life for many, appeased by the blood of
a maiden,
Fairest, and born of the fairest, a queen, most priceless of
victims.'

Thrice they spat as they went by the maid : but her
mother delaying
Fondled her child to the last, heart-crushed ; and the
warmth of her weeping
Fell on the breast of the maid, as her woe broke forth
into wailing.

'Daughter ! my daughter ! forgive me ! Oh curse not
the murderess ! Curse not !

How have I sinned, but in love ? Do the gods grudge
glory to mothers ?

Loving I bore thee in vain in the fate-cursed bride-bed of
Cepheus,

Loving I fed thee and tended, and loving rejoiced in thy
beauty,

Blessing thy limbs as I bathed them, and blessing thy
locks as I combed them ;

Decking thee, ripening to woman, I blest thee : yet blessing
I slew thee !

How have I sinned, but in love ? Oh swear to me, swear
to thy mother,

Never to haunt me with curse, as I go to the grave in my
sorrow,

Childless and lone ; may the gods never send me another,
to slay it !

See, I embrace thy knees—soft knees, where no babe will
be fondled—

Swear to me never to curse me, the hapless one, not in
the death-pang.'

Weeping she clung to the knees of the maid ; and the
maid low answered—

'Curse thee ! Not in the death-pang !' The heart of
the lady was lightened.

Slowly she went by the ledge ; and the maid was alone
in the darkness.

Watching the pulse of the oars die down, as her own
died with them,
Tearless, dumb with amaze she stood, as a storm-stunned
nestling
Fallen from bough or from eave lies dumb, which the
home-going herdsman
Fancies a stone, till he catches the light of its terrified
eyeball.
So through the long long hours the maid stood helpless
hopeless,
Wide-eyed, downward gazing in vain at the black blank
darkness.
Feebly at last she began, while wild thoughts bubbled
within her—
“Guiltless I am : why thus, then ? Are gods more ruth-
less than mortals ?
Have they no mercy for youth ? no love for the souls who
have loved them ?
Even as I loved thee, dread sea, as I played by thy
margin,
Blessing thy wave as it cooled me, thy wind as it breathed
on my forehead,
Bowing my head to thy tempest, and opening my heart to
thy children,
Silvery fish, wreathed shell, and the strange lithe things of
the water,
Tenderly casting them back, as they gasped on the beach
in the sunshine,
Home to their mother—in vain ! for mine sits childless in
anguish !
O false sea ! false sea ! I dreamed what I dreamed of thy
goodness ;
Dreamed of a smile in thy gleam, of a laugh in the splash of
thy ripple :
False and devouring thou art, and the great world dark
and spiteful.”
Awed by her own rash words she was still : and her eyes
to the seaward
Looked for an answer of wrath : far off, in the heart of the
darkness,
Bright white mists rose slowly ; beneath them the wander-
ing ocean

Glimmered and glowed to the deepest abyss ; and the knees
of the maiden

Trembled and sunk in her fear, as afar, like a dawn in the
midnight,

Rose from their seaweed chamber the choir of the mystical
sea-maids.

Onward toward her they came, and her heart beat loud at
their coming,

Watching the bliss of the gods, as they wakened the cliffs
with their laughter.

Onward they came in their joy, and before them the roll of
the surges

Sank, as the breeze sank dead, into smooth green foam-
flecked marble,

Awed ; and the crags of the cliff, and the pines of the
mountain were silent.

Onward they came in their joy, and around them the
lamps of the sea-nymph,

Myriad fiery globes, swam panting and heaving ; and rain-
bows

Crimson and azure and emerald, were broken in star-
showers, lighting

Far through the wine-dark depths of the crystal, the
gardens of Nereus,

Coral and sea-fan and tangle, the blooms and the palms of
the ocean.

Onward they came in their joy, more white than the
foam which they scattered,

Laughing and singing, and tossing and twining, while
eager, the Tritons

Blinded with kisses their eyes, unreprieved and above them
in worship

Hovered the terns, and the seagulls swept past them on
silvery pinions

Echoing softly their laughter ; around them the wantoning
dolphins

Sighed as they plunged, full of love ; and the great sea-
horses which bore them

Curved up their crests in their pride to the delicate arms of
the maidens

Pawing the spray into gems, till a fiery rainfall, un-
harming,

Sparkled and gleamed on the limbs of the nymphs, and the coils of the mermen.

Onward they went in their joy, bathed round with the fiery coolness,

Needing nor sun nor moon, self-lighted, immortal : but others.

Pitiful, floated in silence apart ; in their bosoms the sea-boys,

Slain by the wrath of the seas, swept down by the anger of Nereus ;

Hapless, whom never again on strand or on quay shall their mothers

Welcome with garlands and vows to the temple, but wearily pining

Gaze over island and bay for the sails of the sunken ; they heedless

Sleep in soft bosoms forever, and dream of the surge and the sea-maids.

Onward they passed in their joy ; on their brows neither sorrow nor anger ;

Self-sufficing, as gods, never heeding the woe of the maiden.

She would have shrieked for their mercy : but shame made her dumb ; and their eyeballs.

Stared on her careless and still, like the eyes in the house of the idols.

Seeing they saw not, and passed, like a dream, on the murmuring ripple.

Stunned by the wonder she gazed, wide-eyed, as the glory departed.

‘O fair shapes ! far fairer than I ! Too fair to be ruthless !

Gladden mine eyes once more with your splendor, unlike to my fancies ;

You, then, smiled in the sea-gleam, and laughed in the splash of the ripple.

Awful I deemed you and formless ; inhuman, monstrous as idols ;

Lo, when ye came, ye were women, more loving and lovelier, only ;

Like in all else ; and I blest you : why blest ye not me for my worship ?

Had you no mercy for me, thus guiltless? Ye pitied the
sea-boys :
Why not me, then, more hapless by far? Does your sight
and your knowledge
End with the marge of the waves? Is the world which
ye dwell in not our world?'

Over the mountain aloft ran a rush and a roll and a
roaring ;
Downward the breeze came indignant, and leapt with a
howl to the water,
Roaring in cranny and crag, till the pillars and clefts of
the basalt
Rang like a god-swept lyre, and her brain grew mad with
the noises ;
Crashing and lapping of waters, and sighing and tossing
of weed-beds,
Gurgle and whisper and hiss of the foam, while thundering
surges
Boomed in the wave-worn halls, as they champed at the
roots of the mountain.
Hour after hour in the darkness the wind rushed fierce to
the landward,
Drenching the maiden with spray ; she shivering, weary
and drooping,
Stood with her heart full of thoughts, till the foam-crests
gleamed in the twilight,
Leaping and laughing around, and the east grew red with
the dawning.
Then on the ridge of the hills rose the broad bright sun
in his glory.
Hurling his arrows abroad on the glittering crests of the
surges,
Gilding the soft round bosoms of wood, and the downs
of the coastland ;
Gilding the weeds at her feet, and the foam-laced teeth of
the ledges,
Showing the maiden her home through the veil of her
locks, as they floated
Glistening, damp with the spray, in a long black cloud to
the landward.

High in the far-off glens rose thin blue curls from the
homesteads ;
Softly the low of the herds, and the pipe of the outgoing
herdsman,
Slid to her ear on the water, and melted her heart into
weeping.

Shuddering, she tried to forget them ; and straining her
eyes to the seaward,
Watched for her doom, as she wailed, but in vain, to the
terrible Sun-god.

‘ Dost thou not pity me, Sun, though thy wild dark sister
be ruthless ;

Dost thou not pity me here, as thou seest me desolate,
weary,

Sickened with shame and despair, like a kid torn young
from its mother ?

What if my beauty insult thee, then blight it : but me—
Oh spare me !

Spare me yet, ere he be here, fierce, tearing, unbearable !
See me,

See me, how tender and soft, and thus helpless ! See how
I shudder,

Fancying only my doom. Wilt thou shine thus bright,
when it takes me ?

Are there no deaths save this, great Sun ? No fiery
arrow,

Lightning, or deep-mouthed wave ? Why thus ? What
music in shrieking,

Pleasure in warm live limbs torn slowly ? And dar’st thou
behold them !

Oh, thou hast watched worse deeds ! All sights are alike
to thy brightness !

What if thou waken the birds to their song, dost thou
waken no sorrow ;

Waken no sick to their pain ; no captive to wrench at his
fetters ?

Smile on the garden and fold, and on maidens who sing
at the milking ;

Flash into tapestried chambers, and peep in the eyelids of
lovers,

Showing the blissful their bliss—Dost love, then, the place
where thou smilest ?

Lovest thou cities aflame, fierce blows, and the shrieks of
 the widow ?
 Lovest thou corpse-strewn fields, as thou lightest the path
 of the vulture ?
 Lovest thou these, that thou gazest so gay on my tears,
 and my mother's,
 Laughing alike at the horror of one, and the bliss of
 another ?
 What dost thou care, in thy sky, for the joys and the
 sorrows of mortals ?
 Colder art thou than the nymphs : in thy broad bright eye
 is no seeing.
 Hadst thou a soul—as much soul as the slaves in the house
 of my father,
 Wouldst thou not save ? Poor thralls ! they pitied me,
 clung to me weeping,
 Kissing my hands and my feet—What, are gods more
 ruthless than mortals ?
 Worse than the souls which they rule ? Let me die : they
 war not with ashes !'
 Sudden she ceased, with a shriek : in the spray, like a
 hovering foam-bow,
 Hung, more fair than the foam-bow, a boy in the bloom
 of his manhood,
 Golden-haired, ivory-limbed, ambrosial ; over his shoulder
 Hung for a veil of his beauty the gold-fringed folds of the
 goat-skin,
 Bearing the brass of his shield, as the sun flashed clear on
 its clearness.
 Curved on his thigh lay a falchion, and under the gleam
 of his helmet
 Eyes more blue than the main shone awful ; around him
 Athené
 Shed in her love such grace, such state, and terrible
 daring.
 Hovering over the water he came, upon glittering
 pinions,
 Living, a wonder, outgrown from the tight-laced gold of
 his sandals ;
 Bounding from billow to billow, and sweeping the crests
 like a sea-gull ; [of his leaping.
 Leaping the gulfs of the surge, as he laughed in the joy

Fair and majestic he sprang to the rock ; and the maiden
in wonder
Gazed for a while, and then hid in the dark-rolling wave
of her tresses,
Fearful, the light of her eyes ; while the boy (for her
sorrow had awed him)
Blushed at her blushes, and vanished, like mist on the
cliffs at the sunrise.
Fearful at length she looked forth : he was gone : she,
wild with amazement,
Wailed for her mother aloud : but the wail of the wind
only answered.
Sudden he flashed into sight, by her side ; in his pity and
anger
Moist were his eyes ; and his breath like a rose-bed, as
bolder and bolder,
Hovering under her brows, like a swallow that haunts by
the house-eaves,
Delicate-handed, he lifted the veil of her hair ; while the
maiden
Motionless, frozen with fear, wept loud ; till his lips un-
closing
Poured from their pearl-strung portal the musical wave
of his wonder.
‘ Ah, well spoke she, the wise one, the gray-eyed
Pallas Athené,—
Known to Immortals alone are the prizes which lie for
the heroes
Ready prepared at their feet ; for requiring a little, the
rulers
Pay back the loan tenfold to the man who, careless of
pleasure,
Thirsting for honor and toil, fares forth on a perilous
errand
Led by the guiding of gods, and strong in the strength of
Immortals.
Thus have they led me to thee : from afar, unknowing, I
marked thee,
Shining, a snow-white cross on the dark-green walls of
the sea-cliff ;
Carven in marble I deemed thee, a perfect work of the
craftsman.

Likeness of Amphitrité, or far-famed Queen Cythereia.
Curious I came, till I saw how thy tresses streamed in the
sea-wind,
Glistening, black as the night, and thy lips moved slow
in thy wailing.
Speak again now—Oh speak !. For my soul is stirred to
avenge thee ;
Tell me what barbarous horde, without law, unrighteous
and heartless,
Hateful to gods and to men, thus have bound thee, a
shame to the sunlight,
Scorn and prize to the sailor : but my prize now ; for a
coward,
Coward and shameless were he, who so finding a glorious
jewel
Cast on the wayside by fools, would not win it and keep
it and wear it,
Even as I will thee ; for I swear by the head of my
father,
Bearing thee over the sea-wave, to wed thee in Argos the
fruitful, [carry,
Beautiful, meed of my toil no less than this head which I
Hidden here fearful—Oh speak !'

But the maid, still dumb with amazement,
Watered her bosom with weeping, and longed for her
home and her mother.
Beautiful, eager, he wooed her, and kissed off her tears as
he hovered,
Roving at will, as a bee, on the brows of a rock nymph-
haunted,
Garlanded over with vine, and acanthus, and clambering
roses,
Cool in the fierce still noon, where streams glance clear
in the mossbeds.
Hums on from blossom to blossom, and mingles the
sweets as he tastes them.
Beautiful, eager, he kissed her, and clasped her yet closer
and closer,
Praying her still to speak—

‘Not cruel nor rough did my mother
Bear me to broad-browed Zeus in the depths of the brass-
covered dungeon ;

Neither in vain, as I think, have I talked with the cunning
of Hermes,
Face unto face, as a friend ; or from gray-eyed Pallas
Athené
Learnt what is fit, and respecting myself, to respect in my
dealings
Those whom the gods should love ; so fear not ; to chaste
espousals
Only I woo thee, and swear, that a queen, and alone
without rival
By me thou sittest in Argos of Hellas, throne of my
fathers,
Worshipped by fair-haired kings : why callest thou still on
thy mother ?
Why did she leave thee thus here ? For no foeman has
bound thee ; no foeman
Winning with strokes of the sword such a prize, would so
leave it behind him.'

Just as at first some colt, wild-eyed, with quivering
nostril,
Plunges in fear of the curb, and the fluttering robes of
the rider ;
Soon, grown bold by despair, submits to the will of his
master,
Tamer and tamer each hour, and at last, in the pride of
obedience,
Answers the heel with a curvet, and arches his neck to be
fondled,
Cowed by the need that maid grew tame ; while the hero
indignant
Tore at the fetters which held her : the brass, too cun-
ningly tempered,
Held to the rock by the nails, deep wedged : till the boy,
red with anger,
Drew from his ivory thigh, keen flashing, a falchion of
diamond—
'Now let the work of the smith try strength with the
arms of Immortals !'
Dazzling it fell ; and the blade, as the vine-hook shears
off the vine-bough,
Carved through the strength of the brass, till her arms fell
soft on his shoulder,



PERSEUS RESCUES ANDROMEDA — Page 181

Once she essayed to escape : but the ring of the water
was round her,

Round her the ring of his arms ; and despairing she sank
on his bosom.

Then, like a fawn when startled, she looked with a shriek
to the seaward.

‘Touch me not, wretch that I am ! For accursed, a
shame and a hissing,

Guiltless, accurst no less, I await the revenge of the sea-
gods.

Yonder it comes ! Ah go ! Let me perish unseen, if I
perish !

Spare me the shame of thine eyes, when merciless fangs
must tear me

Piecemeal ! Enough to endure by myself in the light of
the sunshine

Guiltless, the death of a kid !’

But the boy still lingered around her,

Loth, like a boy, to forego her, and waken the cliffs with
his laughter.

‘Yon is the foe, then ? A beast of the sea ? I had deemed
him immortal.

Titan, or Proteus’ self, or Nereus, foeman of sailors :

Yet would I fight with them all, but Poseidon, shaker of
mountains,

Uncle of mine, whom I fear, as is fit ; for he haunts on
Olympus,

Holding the third of the world ; and the gods all rise at
his coming.

Unto none else will I yield, god-helped : how then to a
monster,

Child of the earth and of night, unreasoning, shapeless,
accursed ?’

‘Art thou, too, then, a god ?’

‘No god I,’ smiling he answered ;

‘Mortal as thou, yet divine : but mortal the herds of the
ocean,

Equal to men in that only, and less in all else ; for they
nourish

Blindly the life of the lips, untaught by the gods, without
wisdom :

Shame if I fled before such !’

In her heart new life was enkindled,
Worship and trust, fair parents of love : but she answered
him sighing.

‘ Beautiful, why wilt thou die ? Is the light of the sun,
then, so worthless,
Worthless to sport with thy fellows in flowery glades of
the forest,

Under the broad green oaks, where never again shall I
wander,

Tossing the ball with my maidens, or wreathing the altar
in garlands.

Careless, with dances and songs, till the glens rang loud
to our laughter.

Too full of death the sad earth is already : the halls full of
weepers,

Quarried by tombs all cliffs, and the bones gleam white
on the sea-floor,

Numberless, gnawn by the herds who attend on the pitiless
sea-gods,

Even as mine will be soon : and yet noble it seems to
me dying,

Giving my life for a people, to save to the arms of their
lovers

Maidens and youths for a while : thee, fairest of all, shall
I slay thee ?

Add not thy bones to the many, thus angering idly the
dread ones !

Either the monster will crush, or the sea-queen’s self
overwhelm thee,

Vengeful, in tempest and foam, and the thundering walls
of the surges.

Why wilt thou follow me down ? can we love in the black
blank darkness ?

Love in the realms of the dead, in the land where all is
forgotten ?

Why wilt thou follow me down ? is it joy, on the desolate
oozes,

Meagre to flit, gray ghosts in the depths of the gray salt
water ?

Beautiful ! why wilt thou die, and defraud fair girls of thy
manhood ?

Surely one waits for thee longing, afar in the isles of the
[ocean.

Go thy way ; I mine ; for the gods grudge pleasure to mortals.

Sobbing she ended her moan, as her neck, like a storm-bent lily,

Drooped with the weight of her woe, and her limbs sank, weary with watching,

Soft on the hard-ledged rock : but the boy, with his eye on the monster,

Clasped her, and stood, like a god ; and his lips curved proud as he answered—

‘ Great are the pitiless sea-gods : but greater the Lords of Olympus ;

Greater the Ægis-wielder, and greater is she who attends him.

Clear-eyed Justice her name is, the counsellor, loved of Athené ;

Helper of heroes, who dare, in the god-given might of their manhood,

Greatly to do and to suffer, and far in the fens and the forests

Smite the devourers of men, Heaven-hated, brood of the giants,

Twyformed, strange, without like, who obey not the golden-haired Rulers.

Vainly rebelling they rage, till they die by the swords of the heroes,

Even as this must die ; for I burn with the wrath of my father,

Wandering, led by Athené ; and dare whatsoever be-tides me.

Led by Athené I won from the gray-haired terrible sisters

Secrets hidden from men, when I found them asleep on the sand-hills,

Keeping their eye and their tooth, till they showed me the perilous pathway

Over the waterless ocean, the valley that led to the Gorgon.

Her too I slew in my craft, Medusa, the beautiful horror ;

Taught by Athené I slew her, and saw not herself, but her image,

Watching the mirror of brass, in the shield which a goddess had lent me.

Cleaving her brass-scaled throat, as she lay with her adders around her,

Fearless I bore off her head, in the folds of the mystical goat-skin

Hide of Amaltheié, fair nurse of the Ægis-wielder.

Hither I bear it, a gift to the gods, and a death to my foes,

Freezing the seer to stone to hide thine eyes from the horror.

Kiss me but once, and I go.'

Then lifting her neck, like a sea-bird
Peering up over the wave, from the foam-white swells of her bosom,

Blushing she kissed him: afar, on the topmost Idalian summit

Laughed in the joy of her heart, far-seeing, the queen Aphrodité.

Loosing his arms from her waist he flew upward, awaiting the sea-beast.

Onward it came from the southward, as bulky and black as a galley,

Lazily coasting along, as the fish fled leaping before it;
Lazily breasting the ripple, and watching by sandbar and headland,

Listening for laughter of maidens at bleaching, or song of the fisher,

Children at play on the pebbles, or cattle that pawed on the sand-hills.

Rolling and dripping it came, where bedded in glistening purple

Cold on the cold sea-weeds lay the long white sides of the maiden,

Trembling, her face in her hands, and her tresses afloat on the water.

As when an osprey aloft, dark-eyebrowed, royally crested,

Flags on by creek and by cove, and in scorn of the anger of Nereus

Ranges, the king of the shore; if he see on a glittering shallow,

Chasing the bass and the mullet, the fin of a wallowing
dolphin,
Halting, he wheels round slowly, in doubt at the weight
of his quarry,
Whether to clutch it alive, or to fall on the wretch like a
plummet,
Stunning with terrible talon the life of the brain in the
hindhead :
Then rushes up with a scream, and stooping the wrath of
his eyebrows
Falls from the sky, like a star, while the wind rattles
hoarse in his pinions.
Over him closes the foam for a moment ; and then from
the sand-bed
Rolls up the great fish, dead, and his side gleams white in
the sunshine.
Thus fell the boy on the beast, unveiling the face of the
Gorgon ;
Thus fell the boy on the beast ; thus rolled up the beast in
his horror,
Once, as the dead eyes glared into his ; then his sides,
death-sharpened,
Stiffened and stood, brown rock, in the wash of the wan-
dering water.
Beautiful, eager, triumphant, he leapt back again to his
treasure ;
Leapt back again, full blest, toward arms spread wide to
receive him.
Brimful of honor he clasped her, and brimful of love she
caressed him,
Answering lip with lip ; while above them the queen
Aphrodité
Poured on their foreheads and limbs, unseen, ambrosial
odors,
Givers of longing, and rapture, and chaste content in
espousals.
Happy whom ere they be wedded anoints she, the
Queen Aphrodité !
Laughing she called to her sister, the chaste Tritonid
Athené,
'Seest thou yonder thy pupil, thou maid of the Ægis-
wielder ?

How he has turned himself wholly to love, and caresses
a damsel,
Dreaming no longer of honor, or danger, or Pallas
Athené?

Sweeter, it seems, to the young my gifts are ; so yield me
the stripling ;
Yield him me now, lest he die in his prime, like hapless
Adonis.'

Smiling she answered in turn, that chaste Tritonid
Athené :

'Dear unto me, no less than to thee, is the wedlock of
heroes ;

Dear, who can worthily win him a wife not unworthy ;
and noble,

Pure with the pure to beget brave children, the like of
their father.

Happy, who thus stands linked to the heroes who were,
and who shall be ;

Girdled with holiest awe, not sparing of self ; for his
mother

Watches his steps with the eyes of the gods ; and his
wife and his children

Move him to plan and to do in the farm and the camp
and the council.

Thence comes weal to a nation : but woe upon woe,
when the people

Mingle in love at their will, like the brutes, not heeding
the future.'

Then from her gold-strung loom, where she wrought
in her chamber of cedar,

Awful and fair she arose ; and she went by the glens of
Olympus ;

Went by the isles of the sea, and the wind never ruffled
her mantle ;

Went by the water of Crete, and the black-beaked fleets
of the Phœnics ;

Came to the sea-girt rock which is washed by the surges
forever,

Bearing the wealth of the gods, for a gift to the bride of a
hero.

There she met Andromeden and Persea, shaped like Im-
mortals ;

Solemn and sweet was her smile, while their hearts beat
loud at her coming ;

Solemn and sweet was her smile, as she spoke to the pair
in her wisdom.

‘ Three things hold we, the Rulers, who sit by the
founts of Olympus,

Wisdom, and prowess, and beauty ; and freely we pour
them on mortals ;

Pleased at our image in man, as a father at his in his
children.

One thing only we grudge to mankind : when a hero, un-
thankful,

Boasts of our gifts as his own, stiffnecked, and dishonors
the givers,

Turning our weapons against us. Him Até follows
avenging ;

Slowly she tracks him and sure, as a lyme-hound ; sud-
den she grips him,

Crushing him, blind in his pride, for a sign and a terror
to folly.

This we avenge, as is fit ; in all else never weary of
giving.

Come, then, damsel, and know if the gods grudge
pleasure to mortals.’

Loving and gentle she spoke : but the maid stood in
awe, as the goddess

Plaited with soft swift finger her tresses, and decked her
in jewels,

Armlet and anklet and earbell ; and over her shoulders a
necklace,

Heavy, enamelled, the flower of the gold and the brass
of the mountain.

Trembling with joy she gazed, so well Hæphaistos had
made it,

Deep in the forges of Ætna, while Charis his lady beside
him

Mingled her grace in his craft, as he wrought for his sis-
ter Athené.

Then on the brows of the maiden a veil bound Pallas
Athené ;

Ample it fell to her feet, deep-fringed, a wonder of weav-
ing.

Ages and ages ago it was wrought on the heights of
Olympus,
Wrought in the gold-strung loom, by the finger of cunning
Athené.
In it she wove all creatures that teem in the womb of the
ocean ;
Nereid, siren, and triton, and dolphin, and arrowy
fishes
Glittering round, many-hued, on the flame-red folds of
the mantle.
In it she wove, too, a town where gray-haired kings sat
in judgment ;
Sceptre in hand in the market they sat, doing right by
the people,
Wise : while above watched Justice, and near, far-seeing
Apollo.
Round it she wove for a fringe all herbs of the earth and
the water,
Violet, asphodel, ivy, and vine-leaves, roses and lilies,
Coral and sea-fan and tangle, the blooms and the palms
of the ocean :
Now from Olympus she bore it, a dower to the bride of a
hero.
Over the limbs of the damsel she wrapt it : the maid still
trembled,
Shading her face with her hands ; for the eyes of the goddess
were awful.
Then, as a pine upon Ida when southwest winds blow
landward,
Stately she bent to the damsel, and breathed on her : under
her breathing
Taller and fairer she grew ; and the goddess spoke in her
wisdom.
‘ Courage I give thee ; the heart of a queen, and the
mind of Immortals ;
Godlike to talk with the gods, and to look on their eyes
unshrinking ;
Fearing the sun and the stars no more, and the blue salt
water ;
Fearing us only, the lords of Olympus, friends of the
heroes ;

Chastely and wisely to govern thyself and thy house and
thy people,

Bearing a godlike race to thy spouse, till dying I set
thee .

High for a star in the heavens, a sign and a hope to the
seamen,

Spreading thy long white arms all night in the heights of
the æther,

Hard by thy sire and the hero thy spouse, while near
thee thy mother

Sits in her ivory chair, as she plaits ambrosial tresses.

All night long thou wilt shine ; all day thou wilt feast on
Olympus,

Happy, the guest of the gods, by thy husband, the god-
begotten.

Blissful, they turned them to go : but the fair-tressed
Pallas Athené

Rose, like a pillar of tall white cloud, toward silver
Olympus ;

Far above ocean and shore, and the peaks of the isles and
the mainland ;

Where no frost nor storm is, in clear blue windless
abysses,

High in the home of the summer, the seats of the happy
Immortals,

Shrouded in keen deep blaze, unapproachable ; there ever
youthful

Hebé, Harmonié, and the daughter of Jove, Aphrodité,

Whirled in the white-linked dance with the gold-crowned
Hours and the Graces,

Hand within hand, while clear piped Phœbe, queen of
the woodlands.

All day long they rejoiced : but Athené still in her
chamber

Bent herself over her loom, as the stars rang loud to her
singing,

Chanting of order and right, and of foresight, warden of
nations ;

Chanting of labor and craft, and of wealth in the port and
the garner ;

Chanting of valor and fame, and the man who can fall
with the foremost.

Fighting for children and wife, and the field which his
father bequeathed him.

Sweetly and solemnly sang she, and planned new lessons
for mortals :

Happy, who hearing obey her, the wise unsullied Athené.

EVERSLIE, 1852.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

HYPOTHESES HYPOCHONDRIACÆ.*

AND should she die, her grave should be
Upon the bare top of a sunny hill,
Among the moorlands of her own fair land,
Amid a ring of old and moss-grown stones
In gorse and heather all embosomed.
There should be no tall stone, no marble tomb
Above her gentle corse ;—the ponderous pile
Would press too rudely on those fairy limbs.
The turf should lightly lie, that marked her home.
A sacred spot it would be—every bird
That came to watch her lone grave should be holy.
The deer should browse around her undisturbed ;
The whin bird by, her lonely nest should build
All fearless ; for in life she loved to see
Happiness in all things—
And we would come on summer days
When all around was bright, and set us down
And think of all that lay beneath that turf
On which the heedless moor-bird sits, and whistles
His long, shrill, painful song, as though he plained
For her that loved him and his pleasant hills ;
And we would dream again of bygone days
Until our eyes should swell with natural tears
For brilliant hopes—all faded into air !
As, on the sands of Irāk, near approach
Destroys the traveller's vision of still lakes,
And goodly streams reed-clad, and meadows green ;
And leaves behind the drear reality
Of shadeless, same, yet ever-changing sand !
And when the sullen clouds rose thick on high
Mountains on mountains rolling—and dark mist
Wrapped itself round the hill-tops like a shroud,
When on her grave swept by the moaning wind

* This and the following poem were written at school in early childhood.

Bending the heather bells—then would I come
 And watch by her, in silent loneliness,
 And smile upon the storm—as knowing well
 The lightning's flash would surely turn aside,
 Nor mar the lowly mound, where peaceful sleeps
 All that gave life and love to one fond heart !
 I talk of things that are not ; and if prayers
 By night and day availed from my weak lips,
 Then should they never be ! till I was gone,
 Before the friends I loved, to my long home.
 Oh pardon me, if e'er I say too much ; my mind
 Too often strangely turns to ribald mirth,
 As though I had no doubt nor hope beyond—
 Or brooding melancholy cloy's my soul
 With thoughts of days misspent, of wasted time
 And bitter feelings swallowed up in jests.
 Then strange and fearful thoughts flit o'er my brain
 By indistinctness made more terrible,
 And incubi mock at me with fierce eyes
 Upon my couch : and visions, crude and dire,
 Of planets, suns, millions of miles, infinity,
 Space, time, thought, being, blank nonentity,
 Things incorporeal, fancies of the brain,
 Seen, heard, as though they were material,
 All mixed in sickening mazes, trouble me,
 And lead my soul away from earth and heaven
 Until I doubt whether I be or not !
 And then I see all frightful shapes—lank ghosts,
 Hydras, chimeras, krakens, wastes of sand,
 Herbless and void of living voice—tall mountains
 Cleaving the skies with height immeasurable,
 On which perchance I climb for infinite years ; broad
 seas,
 Studded with islands numberless, that stretch
 Beyond the regions of the sun, and fade
 Away in distance vast, or dreary clouds,
 Cold, dark, and watery, where wander I forever !
 Or space of ether, where I hang for aye !
 A speck, an atom—inconsumable—
 Immortal, hopeless, voiceless, powerless !
 And oft I fancy, I am weak and old,
 And all who love me, one by one, are dead,

And I am left alone—and cannot die !
Surely there is no rest on earth for souls
Whose dreams are like a madman's ! I am young
And much is yet before me—after years
May bring peace with them to my weary heart !

HELSTON, 1835.

TREHILL WELL

THERE stood a low and ivied roof,
As gazing rustics tell,
In times of chivalry and song
'Yclept the holy well.

Above the ivies' branchlets gray
In glistening clusters shone ;
While round the base the grass-blades bright
And spiry foxglove sprung.

The brambles clung in graceful bands,
Chequering the old gray stone
With shining leaflets, whose bright face
In autumn's tinting shone.

Around the fountain's eastern base
A babbling brooklet sped,
With sleepy murmur purling soft
Adown its gravelly bed.

Within the cell the filmy ferns
Too woo the clear wave bent ;
And cushioned mosses to the stone
Their quaint embroidery lent.

The fountain's face lay still as glass—
Save where the streamlet free
Across the basin's gnarled lip
Flowed ever silently.

Above the well a little nook
Once held, as rustics tell,
All garland-decked, an image of
The Lady of the Well.

They tell of tales of mystery,
 Of darkling deeds of woe ;
 But no ! such doings might not brook
 The holy streamlet's flow.

Oh tell me not of bitter thoughts,
 Of melancholy dreams,
 By that fair fount whose sunny wall
 Basks in the western beams.

When last I saw that little stream,
 A form of light there stood,
 That seemed like a precious gem,
 Beneath that archway rude :

And as I gazed with love and awe
 Upon that sylph-like thing,
 Methought that airy form must be
 The fairy of the spring.

HELSTON, 1835.

IN AN ILLUMINATED MISSAL *

I would have loved : there are no mates in heaven ;
 I would be great : there is no pride in heaven ;
 I would have sung, as doth the nightingale
 The summer's night between the moonè pale,
 But Saintès hymnes alone in heaven prevail.
 My love, my song, my skill, my high intent,
 Have I within this seely book y-pent :
 And all that beauty which from every part
 I treasured still alway within mine heart,
 Whether of form or face angelical,
 Or herb or flower, or lofty cathedral,
 Upon these sheets below doth lie y-spred,
 In quaint devices deftly blazonèd.
 Lord, in this tome to thee I sanctify
 The sinful fruits of worldly fantasy.

1839.

* Lines supposed to be found written in an illuminated missal.

THE WEIRD LADY.

THE swevens came up round Harold the Earl
Like motes in the sun's beam ;
And over him stood the Weird Lady,
In her charmed castle over the sea,
Sang ' Lie thou still and dream.'

' Thy steed is dead in his stall, Earl Harold,
Since thou hast been with me ;
The rust has eaten thy harness bright,
And the rats have eaten thy grayhound light,
That was so fair and free.'

Mary Mother she stooped from heaven ;
She wakened Earl Harold out of his sweven,
To don his harness on ;
And over the land and over the sea
He wended abroad to his own countrie,
A weary way to gon.

Oh, but his beard was white with eld,
Oh but his hair was gray ;
He stumbled on by stock and stone,
And as he journeyed he made his moan
Along that weary way.

Earl Harold came to his castle wall ;
The gate was burnt with fire ;
Roof and rafter were fallen down,
The folk were strangers all in the town,
And strangers all in the shire.

Earl Harold came to a house of nuns,
And he heard the dead-bell toll ;
He saw the sexton stand by a grave ;
' Now Christ have mercy, who did us save,
Upon yon fair nun's soul.'

The nuns they came from the convent gate
By one, by two, by three ;
They sang for the soul of a lady bright
Who died for the love of a traitor knight :
It was his own lady.

He stayed the corpse beside the grave ;
 ' A sign, a sign ! ' quod he.
 Mary Mother who rulest heaven,
 Send me a sign if I be forgiven
 By the woman who so loved me.'

A white dove out of the coffin flew ;
 Earl Harold's mouth it kist ;
 He fell on his face, wherever he stood ;
 And the white dove carried his soul to **God**
 Or ever the bearers wist.

DURHAM, 1840.

PALINODIA

YE mountains, on whose torrent-furrowed slopes,
 And bare and silent brows uplift to heaven,
 I envied oft the soul which fills your wastes
 Of pure and stern sublime, and still expanse
 Unbroken by the petty incidents
 Of noisy life : Oh hear me once again !

Winds, upon whose racked eddies, far aloft,
 Above the murmur of the uneasy world,
 My thoughts in exultation held their way :
 Whose tremulous whispers through the rustling glade
 Were once to me unearthly tones of love,
 Joy without object, wordless music, stealing
 Through all my soul, until my pulse beat fast
 With aimless hope, and unexpressed desire—
 Thou sea, who was to me a prophet deep
 Through all thy restless waves, and wasting shores,
 Of silent labor, and eternal change ;
 First teacher of the dense immensity
 Of ever-stirring life, in thy strange forms
 Of fish, and shell, and worm, and oozy weed :
 To me alike thy frenzy and thy sleep
 Have been a deep and breathless joy : Oh hear !

Mountains, and winds, and waves, take back your child !
 Upon thy balmy bosom, Mother Nature,

Where my young spirit dreamt its years away,
Give me once more to nestle : I have strayed
Far through another world, which is not thine.
Through sunless cities, and the weary haunts
Of smoke-grimed labor, and foul revelry
My flagging wing has swept. A mateless bird's
My pilgrimage has been ; through sin and doubt,
And darkness, seeking love. Oh hear me, Nature !
Receive me once again : but not alone ;
No more alone, Great Mother ! I have brought
One who has wandered, yet not sinned, like me.
Upon thy lap, twin children, let us lie ;
And in the light of thine immortal eyes
Let our souls mingle, till The Father calls
To some eternal home the charge He gives thee.

CAMBRIDGE, 1841.

A HOPE

TWIN stars, aloft in ether clear,
Around each other roll away,
Within one common atmosphere
Of their own mutual light and day.

And myriad happy eyes are bent
Upon their changeless love alway ;
As, strengthened by their one intent,
They pour the flood of life and day.

So we through this world's waning night
May, hand in hand, pursue our way ;
Shed round us order, love, and light,
And shine unto the perfect day.

1842.

THE POETRY OF A ROOT CROP

UNDERNEATH their eider-robe
 Russet swede and golden globe,
 Feathered carrot, burrowing deep,
 Steadfast wait in charmed sleep;
 Treasure-houses wherein lie,
 Locked by angels' alchemy,
 Milk and hair, and blood, and bone,
 Children of the barren stone;
 Children of the flaming Air,
 With his blue eye keen and bare,
 Spirit-peopled smiling down
 On frozen field and toiling town—
 Toiling town that will not heed
 God His voice for rage and greed;
 Frozen fields that surpliced lie,
 Gazing patient at the sky;
 Like some marble carven nun,
 With folded hands when work is done,
 Who mute upon her tomb doth pray,
 Till the resurrection day.

EVERSLEY, 1845.

CHILD BALLAD

Jesus, He loves one and all,
 Jesus, He loves children small,
 Their souls are 'waiting round His feet
 On high, before His mercy-seat.

While He wandered here below
 Children small to Him did go,
 At His feet they knelt and prayed,
 On their heads His hands He laid.

Came a Spirit on them then,
 Better than of mighty men,
 A Spirit faithful, pure and mild,
 A Spirit fit for king and child.

Oh ! that Spirit give to me,
 Jesu Lord, where'er I be !

1847.

AIRLY BEACON

AIRLY Beacon, Airly Beacon ;
 Oh the pleasant sight to see
 Shires and towns from Airly Beacon,
 While my love climbed up to me !

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon ;
 Oh the happy hours we lay
 Deep in fern on Airly Beacon,
 Courting through the summer's day !

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon ;
 Oh the weary haunt for me,
 All alone on Airly Beacon,
 With his baby on my knee !

1847.

SAPPHO

SHE lay among the myrtles on the cliff ;
 Above her glared the noon : beneath, the sea.
 Upon the white horizon Atho's peak
 Weltered in burning haze ; all airs were dead ;
 The cicale slept among the tamarisk's hair ;
 The birds sat dumb and drooping. Far below
 The lazy sea-weed glistened in the sun ;
 The lazy sea-fowl dried their steaming wings ;
 The lazy swell crept whispering up the ledge,
 And sank again. Great Pan was laid to rest ;
 And Mother Earth watched by him as he slept,
 And hushed her myriad children for a while.
 She lay among the myrtles on the cliff ;
 And sighed for sleep, for sleep that would not hear,
 But left her tossing still ; for night and day
 A mighty hunger yearned within her heart,
 Till all her veins ran fever ; and her cheek,
 Her long thin hands, and ivory-channelled feet,
 Were wasted with the wasting of her soul.
 Then peevishly she flung her on her face,
 And hid her eyeballs from the blinding glare,

And fingered at the grass and tried to cool
 Her crisp hot lips against the crisp hot sward :
 And then she raised her head, and upward cast
 Wild looks from homeless eyes, whose liquid light
 Gleamed out between deep folds of blue-black hair,
 As gleam twin lakes between the purple peaks
 Of deep Parnassus, at the mournful moon.
 Beside her lay her lyre. She snatched the shell,
 And waked wild music from its silver strings ;
 Then tossed it sadly by.—‘ Ah, hush ! ’ she cries ;
 ‘ Dead offspring of the tortoise and the mine !
 Why mock my discords with thine harmonies ?
 Although a thrice-Olympian lot be thine,
 Only to echo back in every tone
 The moods of nobler natures than thine own.’

EVERSLEY, 1847.
 From *Yeast*.

THE BAD SQUIRE

THE merry brown hares came leaping
 Over the crest of the hill,
 Where the clover and corn lay sleeping
 Under the moonlight still.

Leaping late and early,
 Till under their bite and their tread
 The swedes and the wheat and the barley
 Lay cankered and trampled and dead.

A poacher's widow sat sighing
 On the side of the white chalk bank,
 Where under the gloomy fir-woods
 One spot in the ley throve rank.

She watched a long tuft of clover,
 Where rabbit or hare never ran ;
 For its black sour haulm covered over
 The blood of a murdered man.

She thought of the dark plantation,
And the hares, and her husband's blood,
And the voice of her indignation
Rose up to the throne of God.

'I am long past wailing and whining—
I have wept too much in my life :
I've had twenty years of pining
As an English laborer's wife.

'A laborer in Christian England,
Where they cant of a Saviour's name,
And yet waste men's lives like the vermin's
For a few more brace of game.

'There's blood on your new foreign shrubs, squire,
There's blood on your pointer's feet ;
There's blood on the game you sell, squire,
And there's blood on the game you eat.

'You have sold the laboring-man, squire,
Body and soul to shame,
To pay for your seat in the House, squire,
And to pay for the feed of your game.

'You made him a poacher yourself, squire,
When you'd give neither work nor meat,
And your barley-fed hares robbed the garden
At our starving children's feet ;

'When, packed in one reeking chamber,
Man, maid, mother, and little ones lay ;
While the rain pattered in on the rotting bride-bed,
And the walls let in the day.

'When we lay in the burning fever
On the mud of the cold clay floor,
Till you parted us all for three months, squire,
At the dreary workhouse door.

'We quarrelled like brutes, and who wonders ?
What self-respect could we keep,
Worse housed than your hacks and your pointers,
Worse fed than your hogs and your sheep ?

‘Our daughters with base-born babies
Have wandered away in their shame,
If your misses had slept, squire, where they did,
Your misses might do the same.

‘Can your lady patch hearts that are breaking
With handfuls of coals and rice,
Or by dealing out flannel and sheeting
A little below cost price?

‘You may tire of the jail and the workhouse,
And take to allotments and schools,
But you’ve run up a debt that will never
Be paid us by penny-club rules.

‘In the season of shame and sadness,
In the dark and dreary day,
When scrofula, gout, and madness
Are eating your race away ;

‘When to kennels and liveried varlets
You have cast your daughter’s bread,
And, worn out with liquor and harlots
Your heir at your feet lies dead ;

‘When your youngest, the mealy-mouthed rector,
Lets your soul rot asleep to the grave,
You will find in your God the protector
Of the freemen you fancied your slave.’

She looked at the tuft of clover,
And wept till her heart grew light ;
And at last when her passion was over,
Went wandering into the night.

But the merry brown hares came leaping
Over the uplands still,
Where the clover and corn lay sleeping
On the side of the white chalk hill.

EVERSLEY, 1847.
From *Yeast*.

SCOTCH SONG

OH, forth she went like a braw, braw bride
 To meet her winsome groom,
 When she was aware of twa bonny birds
 Sat biggin' in the broom.

The tane it built with the green, green moss,
 But and the bents sae fine,
 And the tither wi' a lock o' lady's hair
 Linked up wi' siller twine.

'O whaur gat ye the green, green moss,
 O whaur the bents sae fine?
 And whaur gat ye the bonny broun hair
 That ance was tress o' mine?'

'We gat the moss fra' the elditch aile
 The bents fra' the whinny muir,
 And a fause knight threw us the bonny broun hair,
 To please his braw new fere.'

'Gae pull, gae pull the simmer leaves,
 And strew them saft o'er me;
 My token's tint, my love is fause,
 I'll lay me doon and dee.'

1847.

THE YOUNG KNIGHT

A PARABLE

A GAY young knight in Burley stood,
 Beside him pawed his steed so good,
 His hands he wrung as he were wood
 With waiting for his love O!

'Oh, will she come, or will she stay,
 Or will she waste the weary day
 With fools who wish her far away,
 And hate her for her love O?'

But by there came a mighty boar,
His jowl and tushes red with gore,
And on his curled snout he bore
A bracelet rich and rare O !

The knight he shrieked, he ran, he flew,
He searched the wild wood through and through,
But found nought save a mantle blue,
Low rolled within the brake O !

He twined the wild briar, red and white,
Upon his head the garland dight,
The green leaves withered black as night,
And burnt into his brain O !

A fire blazed up within his breast,
He mounted on an aimless quest,
He laid his virgin lance in rest,
And through the forest drove O !

By Rhinefield and by Osmondsleigh,
Through leat and furze brake fast drove he,
Until he saw the homeless sea,
That called with all its waves O !

He laughed aloud to hear the roar,
And rushed his horse adown the shore,
The deep surge rolled him o'er and o'er,
And swept him down the tide O !

NEW FOREST, *July* 12, 1847.

A NEW FOREST BALLAD

OH she tripped over Ocknell plain,
And down by Bradley Water ;
And the fairest maid on the forest side
Was Jane, the keeper's daughter.

She went and went through the broad gray lawns
As down the red sun sank,
And chill as the scent of a new-made grave
The mist smelt cold and dank.

‘A token, a token !’ that fair maid cried,
‘A token that bodes me sorrow ;
For they that smell the grave by night
Will see the corpse to-morrow.

‘My own true love in Burley Walk
Does hunt to-night, I fear ;
And if he meet my father stern,
His game may cost him dear.

‘Ah, here’s a curse on hare and grouse,
A curse on hart and hind ;
And a health to the squire in all England,
Leaves never a head behind.’

Her true love shot a mighty hart
Among the standing rye,
When on him leapt that keeper old
From the fern where he did lie.

The forest laws were sharp and stern,
The forest blood was keen ;
They lashed together for life and death
Beneath the hollies green.

The metal good and the walnut wood
Did soon in flinders flee ;
They tost the orts to south and north,
And grappled knee to knee.

They wrestled up, they wrestled down,
They wrestled still and sore ;
Beneath their feet the myrtle sweet
Was stamped to mud and gore.

Ah, cold pale moon, thou cruel pale moon,
That starest with never a frown
On all the grim and ghastly things
That are wrought in thorpe and town :

And yet, cold pale moon, thou cruel pale moon,
That night hadst never the grace
To lighten two dying Christian men
To see one another's face.

They wrestled up, they wrestled down,
They wrestled sore and still,
The fiend who blinds the eyes of men
That night he had his will.

Like stags full spent, among the bent
They dropped a while to rest ;
When the young man drove his saying knife
Deep in the old man's breast.

The old man drove his gunstock down
Upon the young man's head ;
And side by side, by the water brown,
Those yeomen twain lay dead.

They dug three graves in Lyndhurst yard :
They dug them side by side ;
Two yeomen lie there, and a maiden fair
A widow and never a bride.

IN THE NEW FOREST, 1847.

THE RED KING

THE King was drinking in Malwood Hall,
 There came in a monk before them all :
 He thrust by squire, he thrust by knight,
 Stood over against the dais aright ;
 And, 'The word of the Lord, thou cruel Red King,
 The word of the Lord to thee I bring.
 A grimly sweven I dreamt yestreen ;
 I saw thee lie under the hollins green,
 And through thine heart an arrow keen ;
 And out of thy body a smoke did rise,
 Which smirched the sunshine out of the skies :
 So if thou God's anointed be
 I rede thee unto thy soul thou see.
 For might and pall thou hast y-sold,
 False knight to Christ, for gain and gold ;
 And for this thy forest were digged down all,
 Steading and hamlet and churches tall ;
 And Christés poor were ousten forth,
 To beg their bread from south to north.
 So tarry at home, and fast and pray,
 Lest fiends hunt thee in the judgment-day.'

The monk he vanished where he stood ;
 King William sterte up wroth and wood ;
 Quod he, 'Fools' wits will jump together ;
 The Hampshire ale and the thunder weather
 Have turned the brains for us both, I think ;
 And monks are curst when they fall to drink.
 A lothly sweven I dreamt last night,
 How there hoved anigh me a griesly knight,
 Did smite me down to the pit of hell ;
 I shrieked and woke, so fast I fell.
 There's Tyrrel as sour as I, perdie,
 So he of you all shall hunt with me ;
 A grimly brace for a hart to see.'

The Red King down from Malwood came ;
 His heart with wine was all aflame,
 His eyne were shotten, red as blood,
 He rated and swore, wherever he rode.

They roused a hart, that grimly brace,
 A hart of ten, a hart of grease,
 Fled over against the kingés place.
 The sun it blinded the kingés ee,
 A fathom behind his hocks shot he :
 ‘Shoot thou,’ quod he, ‘in the fiendés name,
 To lose such a quarry were seven years’ shame.’
 And he hove up his hand to mark the game,
 Tyrrel he shot full light, God wot ;
 For whether the saints they swerved the shot,
 Or whether by treason, men knowen not,
 But under the arm, in a secret part,
 The iron fled through the kingés heart.
 The turf it squelched where the Red King fell ;
 And the fiends they carried his soul to hell,
 Quod ‘His master’s name it hath sped him well.

Tyrrel he smiled full grim that day,
 Quod ‘Shooting of kings is no bairns’ play ;’
 And he smote in the spurs, and fled fast away.
 As he pricked along by Fritham plain,
 The green tufts flew behind like rain ;
 The waters were out, and over the sward :
 He swam his horse like a stalwart lord ;
 Men clepen that water Tyrrel’s ford.
 By Rhinefield and by Osmondsleigh,
 Through glade and furze brake fast drove he,
 Until he heard the roaring sea ;
 Quod he, ‘Those gay waves they call me.’
 By Mary’s grace a seely boat
 On Christchurch bar did lie afloat ;
 He gave the shipmen mark and groat,
 To ferry him over to Normandie,
 And there he fell to sanctuarie ;
 God send his soul all bliss to see.

And fend our princes every one,
 From foul mishap and trahison ;
 But kings that harrow Christian men
 Shall England never bide again.

IN THE NEW FOREST, 1847.

THE OUTLAW

OH, I wadna be a yeoman, mither, to follow my father's
 trade,
 To bow my back in miry banks, at pleugh and hoe and
 spade.
 Stinting wife, and bairns, and kye, to fat some courtier
 lord,—
 Let them die o' rent wha like, mither, and I'll die by sword.

 Nor I wadna be a clerk, mither, to bide aye ben,
 Scrabbling ower the sheets o' parchment with a weary
 weary pen ;
 Looking through the lang stane windows at a narrow strip
 o' sky,
 Like a laverock in a withy cage, until I pine away and die.

 Nor I wadna be a merchant, mither, in his lang furred
 gown,
 Trailing strings o' footsore horses through the noisy dusty
 town ;
 Louting low to knights and ladies, fumbling o'er his
 wares,
 Telling lies, and scraping siller, heaping cares on cares.

 Nor I wadna be a soldier, mither, to dice wi' ruffian
 bands,
 Pining weary months in castles, looking over wasted
 lands.
 Smoking byres, and shrieking women, and the grewsome
 sights o' war—
 There's blood on my hand eneugh, mither ; it's ill to make
 it mair.

 If I had married a wife, mither, I might ha' been douce
 and still,
 And sat at hame by the ingle side to crack and laugh my
 fill ;
 Sat at hame wi' the woman I looded, and wi' bairnies at
 my knee :
 But death is bauld, and age is cauld, and luve's no for me.

For when first I stirred in your side, mither, ye ken full
well
How you lay all night up among the deer out on the open
fell ;
And so it was that I won the heart to wander far and
near,
Caring neither for land nor lassie, but the bonnie dun deer.
Yet I am not a losel and idle, mither, nor a thief that
steals ;
I do but hunt God's cattle, upon God's ain hills ;
For no man buys and sells the deer, and the bonnie fells
are free
To a belted knight with hawk on hand, and a gangrel
loon like me.

So I'm aff and away to the muirs, mither, to hunt the deer,
Ranging far frae frowning faces, and the douce folk here ;
Crawling up through burn and bracken, louping down
the screes,
Looking out frae craig and headland, drinking up the
simmer breeze.

Oh, the wafts o' heather honey, and the music o' the brae,
As I watch the great harts feeding, nearer, nearer a' the
day.

Oh, to hark the eagle screaming, sweeping, ringing round
the sky—
That's a bonnier life than stumbling ower the muck to colt
and kye.

And when I'm taen and hangit, mither, a brittling o' my
deer,
Ye'll no leave your bairn to the corbie craws, to dangle
in the air ;
But ye'll send up my twa douce brethren, and ye'll steal
me frae the tree,
And bury me up on the brown brown muirs, where I aye
looded to be.

Ye'll bury me 'twixt the brae and the burn, in a glen far
away,
Where I may hear the heathcock crawl, and the great
harts bray ;

And gin my ghaist can walk, mither, I'll go glowering at
the sky,
The livelong night on the black hill sides where the dun
deer lie.

IN THE NEW FOREST, 1847.

SING HEIGH-HO !

THERE sits a bird on every tree ;

Sing heigh-ho !

There sits a bird on every tree,
And courts his love as I do thee ;

Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho !

Young maids must marry.

There grows a flower on every bough ;

Sing heigh-ho !

There grows a flower on every bough,
Its petals kiss—I'll show you how :

Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho !

Young maids must marry.

From sea to stream the salmon roam ;

Sing heigh-ho !

From sea to stream the salmon roam ;
Each finds a mate, and leads her home ;

Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho !

Young maids must marry.

The sun's a bridegroom, earth a bride ;

Sing heigh-ho !

They court from morn till eventide ;
The earth shall pass, but love abide

Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho !

Young maids must marry.

EVERSLEY, 1848.

A MARCH

DREARY East winds howling o'er us ;
 Clay-lands knee-deep spread before us ;
 Mire and ice and snow and sleet ;
 Aching backs and frozen feet ;
 Knees which reel as marches quicken,
 Ranks which thin as corpses thicken ;
 While with carrion birds we eat,
 Calling puddle-water sweet,
 As we pledge the health of our general, who fares as rough
 as we :
 What can daunt us, what can turn us, led to death by
 such as he ?

EVERSLEY, 1847.

A LAMENT

THE merry merry lark was up and singing,
 And the hare was out the feeding on the lea ;
 And the merry merry bells below were ringing,
 When my child's laugh rang through me.
 Now the hare is snared and dead beside the snow-yard,
 And the lark beside the dreary winter sea ;
 And the baby in his cradle in the churchyard
 Sleeps sound till the bell brings me.

EVERSLEY, 1848.

THE NIGHT BIRD

A MYTH

A FLOATING, a floating
 Across the sleeping sea,
 All night I heard a singing bird
 Upon the topmost tree.
 'Oh came you off the isles of Greece,
 Or off the banks of Seine ;
 Or off some tree in forest free,
 Which fringe the western main ?'

'I came not off the old world
Not yet from off the new—
But I am one of the birds of God
Which sing the whole night through.'

'Oh sing, and wake the dawning—
Oh whistle for the wind ;
The night is long, the current strong,
My boat it lags behind.'

'The current sweeps the old world,
The current sweeps the new ;
The wind will blow, the dawn will glow
Ere thou hast sailed them through.'

EVERSLEY, 1848.

THE DEAD CHURCH

Wild wild wind, wilt thou never cease thy sighing ?
Dark dark night, wilt thou never wear away ?
Cold cold church, in thy death sleep lying,
The Lent is past, thy Passion here, but not thine Easter-day.

Peace, faint heart, though the night be dark and sighing ;
Rest, fair corpse, where thy Lord himself hath lain.
Weep, dear Lord, above thy bride low lying ;
Thy tears shall wake her frozen limbs to life and health again.

EVERSLEY, 1848.

A PARABLE FROM LIEBIG

The church bells were ringing, the devil sat singing
On the stump of a rotting old tree ;
'Oh faith it grows cold, and the creeds they grow old,
And the world is nigh ready for me.'

The bells went on ringing, a spirit came singing,
And smiled as he crumbled the tree ;
'Yon wood does but perish new seedlings to cherish,
And the world is too live yet for thee.'

EVERSLEY, 1848.

THE STARLINGS

EARLY in spring time, on raw and windy mornings,
Beneath the freezing house-caves I heard the starling
sing—

‘Ah dreary March month, is this then a time for building
wearily?

Sad, sad, to think that the year is but begun.’

Late in the autumn, on still and cloudless evenings,
Among the golden reed-beds I heard the starlings sing—
‘Ah that sweet March month, when we and our mates
were courting merrily;

Sad, sad, to think that the year is all but done.’

EVERSLEY, 1848.

OLD AND NEW

A PARABLE

SEE how the autumn leaves float by decaying,
Down the wild swirls of the rain-swollen stream.
So fleet the works of men, back to their earth again;
Ancient and holy things fade like a dream,

Nay! see the spring-blossoms steal forth a-maying,
Clothing with tender hues orchard and glen;
So, though old forms pass by, ne’er shall their spirit die,
Look! England’s bare boughs show green leaf again.

EVERSLEY, 1848.

THE WATCHMAN

‘WATCHMAN, what of the night?’

‘The stars are out in the sky;
And the merry round moon will be rising soon,
For us to go sailing by.’

‘Watchman, what of the night?’

‘The tide flows in from the sea;
There’s water to float a little cockboat
Will carry such fishes as we.’

‘Watchman, what of the night?’
 ‘The night is a fruitful time;
 When to many a pair are born children fair,
 To be christened at morning chime.’

1849.

THE WORLD'S AGE

Who will say the world is dying?
 Who will say our prime is past?
 Sparks from Heaven, within us lying,
 Flash, and will flash till the last.
 Fools! who fancy Christ mistaken;
 Man a tool to buy and sell;
 Earth a failure, God-forsaken,
 Anteroom of Hell.

Still the race of Hero-spirits
 Pass the lamp from hand to hand;
 Age from age the Words inherits—
 ‘Wife, and Child, and Fatherland.’
 Still the youthful hunter gathers
 Fiery joy from wold and wood;
 He will dare as dared his fathers
 Give him cause as good.

While a slave bewails his fetters;
 While an orphan pleads in vain;
 While an infant lisps his letters,
 Heir of all the ages gain;
 While a lip grows ripe for kissing;
 While a moan from man is wrung;
 Know, by every want and blessing,
 That the world is young.

1849.

THE SANDS OF DEE

‘O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
 And call the cattle home,
 And call the cattle home
 Across the sands of Dee;’
 The western wind was wild and dank with foam,
 And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
 And o'er and o'er the sand,
 And round and round the sand,
 As far as eye could see.
 The rolling mist came down and hid the land :
 And never home came she.

'Oh ! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
 A tress of golden hair,
 A drowned maiden's hair
 Above the nets at sea ?
 Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
 Among the stakes on Dee.'

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
 The cruel crawling foam,
 The cruel hungry foam,
 To her grave beside the sea :
 But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
 Across the sands of Dee.

EVERSLEY, 1849.

THE TIDE ROCK

How sleeps yon rock, whose half-day's bath is done.
 With broad bright side beneath the broad bright sun,
 Like sea-nymph tired, on cushioned mosses sleeping.
 Yet, nearer drawn, beneath her purple tresses
 From drooping brows we find her slowly weeping.
 So many a wife for cruel man's caresses
 Must inly pine and pine, yet outward bear
 A gallant front to this world's gaudy glare.

IEFRECOMBE, 1849.

ELEGIACS

WEARILY stretches the sand to the surge, and the surge to
 the cloudland ;
 Wearily onward I ride, watching the water alone.
 Not as of old, like Homeric Achilles, *κνδεί γαιων*
 Joyous knight-errant of God, thirsting for labor and strife ;

No more on magical steed borne free through the regions
 of ether,
 But, like the hack which I ride, selling my sinew for gold.
 Fruit-bearing autumn is gone ; let the sad quiet winter
 hang o'er me—
 What were the spring to a soul laden with sorrow and
 shame ?
 Blossoms would fret me with beauty ; my heart has no
 time to bepraise them ;
 Gray rock, bough, surge, cloud, waken no yearning within.
 Sing not, thou sky-lark above ! even angels pass hushed by
 the weeper.
 Scream on, ye sea-fowl ! my heart echoes your desolate
 cry.
 Sweep the dry sand on, thou wild wind, to drift o'er the
 shell and the sea-weed ;
 Sea-weed and shell, like my dreams, swept down the
 pitiless tide.
 Just is the wave which up tore us ; 'tis Nature's own law
 which condemns us ;
 Woe to the weak who, in pride, build on the faith of the
 sand !
 Joy to the oak of the mountain : he trusts to the might of
 the rock-clefts ;
 Deeply he mines, and in peace feeds on the wealth of the
 stone.

* * * * * *

MORTE SANDS, DEVONSHIRE.

February, 1849.

DARTSIDE

I CANNOT tell what you say, green leaves,
 I cannot tell what you say :
 But I know that there is a spirit in you,
 And a word in you this day.

I cannot tell what you say, rosy rocks,
 I cannot tell what you say :
 But I know that there is a spirit in you,
 And a word in you this day.

I cannot tell what you say, brown streams,
 I cannot tell what you say :
 But I know that in you too a spirit doth live,
 And a word doth speak this day.

‘Oh green is the color of faith and truth,
 And rose the color of love and youth,
 And brown of the fruitful clay.
 Sweet Earth is faithful, and fruitful, and young,
 And her bridal day shall come ere long,
 And you shall know what the rocks and the streams
 And the whispering woodlands say.’

DREW'S TEIGNTON' DARTHMOOR,
July 31, 1849.

MY HUNTING SONG

FORWARD! Hark forward's the cry !
 One more fence and we're out on the open,
 So to us at once, if you want to live near us !
 Hark to them, ride to them, beauties ! as on they go,
 Leaping and sweeping away in the vale below !
 Cowards and bunglers, whose heart or whose eye is slow,
 Find themselves staring alone.

So the great cause flashes by ;
 Nearer and clearer its purposes open,
 While louder and prouder the world-echoes cheer us :
 Gentlemen sportsmen, you ought to live up to us,
 Lead us, and lift us, and hallo our game to us—
 We cannot call the hounds off, and no shame to us—
 Don't be left staring alone !

EVERSLEY, 1849.

ALTON LOCKE'S SONG

WEEP, weep, weep and weep,
For pauper, dolt, and slave !
Hark ! from wasted moor and fen,
Feverous alley, stifling den,
Swells the wail of Saxon men—
Work ! or the grave !

Down, down, down and down,
With idler, knave, and tyrant !
Why for sluggards cark and moil ?
He that will not live by toil
Has no right on English soil !
God's word's our warrant !

Up, up, up and up !
Face your game and play it !
The night is past, behold the sun !
The idols fall, the lie is done !
The Judge is set, the doom begun !
Who shall stay it ?

ON TORRIDGE *May* 1849.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

THE Day of the Lord is at hand, at hand :
Its storms roll up the sky :
The nations sleep starving on heaps of gold ;
All dreamers toss and sigh ;
The night is darkest before the morn ;
When the pain is sorest the child is born,
And the Day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, angels of God—
Freedom, and Mercy, and Truth ;
Come ! for the Earth is grown coward and old,
Come down, and renew us her youth.
Wisdom, Self-Sacrifice, Daring, and Love,
Haste to the battle-field, stoop from above,
To the Day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, hounds of hell—
 Famine, and Plague, and War ;
 Idleness, Bigotry, Cant, and Misrule,
 Gather, and fall in the snare !
 Hireling and Mammonite, Bigot and Knave,
 Crawl to the battlefield, sneak to your grave,
 In the Day of the Lord at hand.

Who would sit down and sigh for a lost age of gold,
 While the Lord of all ages is here ?
 True hearts will leap up at the trumpet of God,
 And those who can suffer, can dare.
 Each old age of gold was an iron age too,
 And the meekest of saints may find stern work to do,
 In the Day of the Lord at hand

ON THE TORRIDGE, DEVONSHIRE.
September 10, 1849.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

It chanced upon the merry merry Christmas eve,
 I went sighing past the church across the moorland
 dreary—
 ‘Oh ! never sin and want and woe this earth will leave,
 And the bells but mock the wailing round, they sing so
 cheery.
 How long, O Lord ! how long before Thou come again ?
 Still in cellar, and in garret, and on moorland dreary
 The orphans moan, and widows weep, and poor men toil
 in vain,
 Till earth is sick of hope deferred, though Christmas
 bells be cheery.”

Then arose a joyous clamor from the wild-fowl on the
 mere,
 Beneath the stars, across the snow, like clear bells
 ringing,
 And a voice within cried—‘ Listen !—Christmas carol even
 here !
 Though thou be dumb, yet o’er their work the stars and
 snows are singing.

Blind ! I live, I love, I reign ; and all the nations through
 With the thunder of my judgments even now are ringing.
 Do thou fulfil thy work but as yon wild-fowl do,
 Thou wilt heed no less the wailing, yet hear through it
 angels singing.'

EVERSLEY, 1849.

THE OUBIT *

It was an hairy oubit, sae proud he crept alang,
 A feckless hairy oubit, and merrily he sang—
 ' My Minnie bade me bide at hame until I won my wings ;
 I show her soon my soul's aboon the warks o' creeping
 things.'

This feckless hairy oubit cam' hirpling by the linn,
 A swirl o' wind cam' down the glen, and blew that oubit in :
 Oh when he took the water, the saumon fry they rose,
 And tigg'd him a' to pieces sma', by head and tail and toes.

Tak' warning then, young poets a', by this poor oubit's
 shame ;
 Though Pegasus may nicher loud, keep Pegasus at name.
 Oh haud your hands frae inkhorns, though a' the Muses
 woo ;
 For critics lie, like saumon fry, to mak' their meals o' you.

EVERSLEY, 1851.

THE THREE FISHERS

THREE fishers went sailing away to the West,
 Away to the West as the sun went down ;
 Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
 And the children stood watching them out of the town ;
 For men must work, and women must weep,
 And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
 Though the harbor bar be moaning.

* Found among Sandy Mackaye's papers of a hairy oubit who would not mind his mother.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
 And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down ;
 They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
 And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown.
 But men must work, and women must weep,
 Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
 And the harbor bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
 In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
 And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
 For those who will never come home to the town ;
 For men must work, and women must weep,
 And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep ,
 And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

EVERSLEY, JUNE 25, 1851.

SONNET

OH, thou hadst been a wife for Shakspeare's self !
 No head, save some world-genius, ought to rest
 Above the treasures of that perfect breast,
 Or nightly draw fresh light from those keen stars
 Through which thy soul awes ours : yet thou art bound—
 O waste of nature !—to a craven hound ;
 To shameless lust, and childish greed of pelf ;
 Athené to a Satyr : was that link
 Forged by The Father's hand ? Man's reason bars
 The bans which God allowed.—Ay, so we think :
 Forgetting, thou hadst weaker been, full blest,
 Than thus made strong by suffering ; and more great
 In martyrdom, than throned as Cæsar's mate.

EVERSLEY, 1851.

MARGARET TO DOLCINO

Ask if I love thee? Oh, smiles cannot tell
Plainer what tears are now showing too well.
Had I not loved thee, my sky had been clear :
Had I not loved thee, I had not been here,
Weeping by thee.

Ask if I love thee? How else could I borrow
Pride from man's slander, and strength from my sorrow?
Laugh when they sneer at the fanatic's bride,
Knowing no bliss, save to toil and abide
Weeping by thee.

ANDERNACH ON THE RHINE,
AUGUST, 1851.

DOLCINO TO MARGARET

THE world goes up and the world goes down,
And the sunshine follows the rain ;
And yesterday's sneer and yesterday's frown
Can never come over again,
Sweet wife :
No, never come over again.

For woman is warm though man be cold,
And the night will hallow the day ;
Till the heart which at even was weary and old
Can rise in the morning gay,
Sweet wife ;
To its work in the morning gay.

ANDERNACH, 1851.

THE UGLY PRINCESS

My parents bow, and lead them forth,
For all the crowd to see—
Ah well ! the people might not care
To cheer a dwarf like me.

They little know how I could love,
 How I could plan and toil,
 To swell those drudges' scanty gains,
 Their mites of rye and oil.

They little know what dreams have been
 My playmates, night and day ;
 Of equal kindness, helpful care,
 A mother's perfect sway.

Now earth to earth in convent walls,
 To earth in churchyard sod :
 I was not good enough for man,
 And so am given to God.

BERTRICH IN THE EIFEL, 1851.

SONNET

The baby sings not on its mother's breast ;
 Nor nightingales who nestle side by side ;
 Nor I by thine : but let us only part,
 Then lips which should but kiss, and so be still,
 As having uttered all, must speak again—
 O stunted thoughts ! O chill and fettered rhyme
 Yet my great bliss, though still entirely blest,
 Losing its proper home, can find no rest :
 So, like a child who whiles away the time
 With dance and carol till the eventide,
 Watching its mother homeward through the glen ;
 Or nightingale, who, sitting far apart,
 Tells to his listening mate within the nest
 The wonder of his star-entranced heart
 Till all the wakened woodlands laugh and thrill
 Forth all my being bubbles into song ;
 And rings aloft, not smooth, yet clear and strong.

BERTRICH, 1851.

THE SWAN-NECK

EVIL sped the battle play
On the Pope Calixtus' day ;
Mighty war-smiths, thanes and lords,
In Senlac slept the sleep of swords.
Harold Earl, shot over shield,
Lay along the autumn weald ;
Slaughter such was never none
Since the Ethelings England won.

Thither Lady Githa came,
Weeping sore for grief and shame ;
How may she her first-born tell ?
Frenchmen stript him where he fell,
Gashed and marred his comely face ;
Who can know him in his place ?

Up and spake two brethren wise,
'Youngest hearts have keenest eyes ;
Bird which leaves its mother's nest,
Moults its pinions, moults its crest.
Let us call the Swan-neck here,
She that was his leman dear ;
She shall know him in this stound ;
Foot of wolf, and scent of hound,
Eye of hawk, and wing of dove,
Carry woman to her love.'

Up and spake the Swan-neck high,
'Go ! to all your thanes let cry
How I loved him best of all,
I whom men his leman call ;
Better knew his body fair
Than the mother which him bare.
When ye lived in wealth and glee
Then ye scorned to look on me ;
God hath brought the proud ones low
After me afoot to go.'

Rousing erne and sallow glede,
Rousing gray wolf off his feed,
Over franklin, earl, andthane.
Heaps of mother-naked slain,
Round the red field tracing slow,
Stooped that Swan-neck white as snow ;

Never blushed nor turned away,
 Till she found him where he lay ;
 Clipt him in her armés fair,
 Wrapt him in her yellow hair,
 Bore him from the battle-stead,
 Saw him laid in pall of lead,
 Took her to a minster high,
 For Earl Harold's soul to cry.

Thus fell Harold, bracelet-giver ;
 Jesu rest his soul for ever ;
 Angles all from thrall deliver ;
 Miserere Domine.

EVERSLEY, 1861.

A THOUGHT FROM THE RHINE

I HEARD an Eagle crying all alone
 Above the vineyards through the summer night,
 Among the skeletons of robber towers ;
 Because the ancient eyrie of his race
 Was trenched and walled by busy-handed men ;
 And all his forest-chace and woodland wild,
 Wherefrom he fed his young with hare and roe,
 Were trim with grapes which swelled from hour to hour,
 And tossed their golden tendrils to the sun
 For joy at their own riches :—So, I thought,
 The great devourers of the earth shall sit,
 Idle and impotent, they know not why,
 Down-staring from their barren height of state
 On nations grown too wise to slay and slave,
 The puppets of the few ; while peaceful lore
 And fellow-help make glad the heart of earth,
 With wonders which they fear and hate, as he,
 The Eagle, hates the vineyard slopes below.

ON THE RHINE, 1851.

THE LONGBEARDS' SAGA. A.D. 400

OVER the camp-fires
Drank I with heroes,
Under the Donau bank,
Warm in the snow-trench :
Sagamen heard I there,
Men of the Longbeards,
Cunning and ancient,
Honey-sweet-voiced.
Scaring the wolf cub,
Scaring the horn-owl,
Shaking the snow-wreaths
Down from the pine-boughs,
Up to the star roof
Rang out their song.
Singing how Winil men,
Over the ice-floes
Sledging from Scanland
Came unto Scoring ;
Singing of Gambara,
Freya's beloved,
Mother of Ayo,
Mother of Ibor.
Singing of Wendel men,
Ambri and Assi ;
How to the Winilfolk
Went they with war-words,--
'Few are ye, strangers,
And many are we :
Pay us now toll and fee,
Cloth-yarn, and rings, and beeves :
Else at the raven's meal
Bide the sharp bill's doom.'
Clutching the dwarf's work then,
Clutching the bullock's shell,
Girding gray iron on,
Forth fared the Winils all,
Fared the Alruna's sons,
Ayo and Ibor.
Mad at heart stalked they :
Loud wept the women all,

Loud the Alruna wife ;
Sore was their need.
Out of the morning land,
Over the snow-drifts,
Beautiful Freya came,
Tripping to Scoring.
White were the moorlands,
And frozen before her :
Green were the moorlands,
And blooming behind her.
Out of her gold locks
Shaking the spring flowers,
Out of her garments
Shaking the south wind,
Around in the birches
Awaking the throstles,
And making chaste housewives all
Long for their heroes home,
Loving and love-giving,
Came she to Scoring.
Came unto Gambara,
Wisest of Valas, —
'Vala, why weepest thou ?
Far in the wide-blue,
High up in the Elfin-home,
Heard I thy weeping.'
'Stop not my weeping,
Till one can fight seven.
Sons have I, heroes tall,
First in the sword-play ;
This day at the Wendels' hands
Eagles must tear them.
Their mothers, thrall-weary,
Must grind for the Wendels.'
Wept the Alruna wife ;
Kissed her fair Freya :—
'Far off in the morning land,
High in Valhalla,
A window stands open ;
Its sill is the snow-peaks,
Its posts are the waterspouts,
Storm-rack its lintel ;

Gold cloud-flakes above
Are piled for the roofing,
Far up to the Elfin-home,
High in the wide-blue.
Smiles out each morning thence
Odin Allfather ;
From under the cloud-eaves
Smiles out on the heroes,
Smiles on chaste housewives all,
Smiles on the brood-mares,
Smiles on the smiths' work :
And theirs is the sword-luck,
With them is the glory, —
So Odin hath sworn it, —
Who first in the morning
Shall meet him and greet him.'
Still the Alruna wept : —
'Who then shall greet him ?
Women alone are here :
Far on the moorlands
Behind the war-lindens,
In vain for the bill's doom
Watch Winil heroes all,
One against seven.'
Sweetly the Queen laughed : —
'Hear thou my counsel now ;
Take to thee cunning,
Beloved of Freya.
Take thou thy women-folk,
Maidens and wives :
Over your ankles
Lace on the white war-hose ;
Over your bosoms
Link up the hard mail-nets ;
Over your lips
Plait long tresses with cunning ; —
So war-beasts full-bearded
King Odin shall deem you,
When off the gray sea-beach
At sunrise ye greet him.'
Night's son was driving
His golden-haired horses up ;

Over the eastern firths
 High flashed their manes.
 Smiled from the cloud-eaves out
 Allfather Odin,
 Waiting the battle-sport :
 Freya stood by him.
 'Who are these heroes tall,—
 Lusty-limbed Longbeards ?
 Over the swans, bath
 Why cry they to me ?
 Bones should be crashing fast,
 Wolves should be full-fed,
 Where such, mad-hearted,
 Swing hands in the sword-play.'

Sweetly laughed Freya :—
 'A name thou hast given them,
 Shames neither thee nor them,
 Well can they wear it.
 Give them the victory,
 First have they greeted thee ;
 Give them the victory,
 Yokefellow mine !
 Maidens and wives are these,—
 Wives of the Winils ;
 Few are their heroes
 And far on the war-road,
 So over the swans' bath
 They cry unto thee.'

Royally laughed he then ;
 Dear was that craft to him,
 Odin Allfather,
 Shaking the clouds.
 'Cunning are women all,
 Bold and importunate !
 Longbeards their name shall be,
 Ravens shall thank them :
 Where women are heroes,
 What must the men be ?
 Theirs is the victory ;
 No need of me !'

SAINT MAURA. A.D. 304

THANK God ! Those gazers' eyes are gone at last !
The guards are crouching underneath the rock ;
The lights are fading in the town below,
Around the cottage which this morn was ours.
Kind sun, to set, and leave us here alone ;
Alone upon our crosses with our God ;
While all the angels watch us from the stars.
Kind moon, to shine so clear and full on him,
And bathe his limbs in glory, for a sign
Of what awaits him ! Oh look on him, Lord !
Look, and remember how he saved thy lamb !
Oh listen to me, teacher, husband, love,
Never till now loved utterly ! Oh say,
Say you forgive me ! No—you must not speak :
You said it to me hours ago—long hours !
Now you must rest, and when to-morrow comes
Speak to the people, call them home to God,
A deacon on the Cross, as in the Church ;
And plead from off the tree with outspread arms,
To show them that the Son of God endured
For them—and me. Hush ! I alone will speak,
And while away the hours till dawn for you.
I know you have forgiven me ; as I lay
Beneath your feet, while they were binding me,
I knew I was forgiven then ! When I cried
' Here am I, husband ! The lost lamb returned,
All re-baptized in blood ! ' and you said, ' Come !
Come to thy bride-bed, martyr, wife once more !'
From that same moment all my pain was gone ;
And ever since those sightless eyes have smiled
Love—love ! Alas, those eyes ! They made me fall.
I could not bear to see them, bleeding, dark,
Never, no never to look into mine ;
Never to watch me round the little room
Singing about my work, or flash on me
Looks bright with counsel.—Then they drove me mad
With talk of nameless tortures waiting you—
And I could save you ! You would hear your love—
They knew you loved me, cruel men ! And then—
Then came a dream ; to say one little word,

One easy wicked word, we both might say,
 And no one hear us, but the lictors round ;
 One tiny sprinkle of the incense grains,
 And both, both free ! And life had just begun—
 Only three months—short months—your wedded **wife**
 Only three months within the cottage there—
 Hoping I bore your child. . . .
 Ah ! husband ! Saviour ! God ! think gently of **me** !
 I am forgiven ! . . .

And then another dream ;
 A flash—so quick, I could not bear the blaze ;
 I could not see the smoke among the light—
 To wander out through unknown lands, and lead
 You by the hand through hamlet, port, and town,
 On, on, until we died ; and stand each day
 To glory in you, as you preached and prayed
 From rock and bournestone, with that voice, **those**
 words,
 Mingled with fire and honey—you would wake,
 Bend, save whole nations ! would not that atone
 For one short word ?—ay, make it right, to save
 You, you, to fight the battles of the Lord ?
 And so—and so—alas ! you knew the rest !
 You answered me. . . .
 Ah cruel words ! No ! Blessed, godlike words.
 You had done nobly had you struck me dead,
 Instead of striking me to life !—the temptress ? . . .
 ‘Traitor ! apostate ! dead to God and me !’——
 ‘The smell of death upon me ?’—so it was !
 True ! true ! well spoken, hero ! Oh they snapped,
 Those words, my madness, like the angel’s voice
 Thrilling the graves to birth-pangs. All was clear.
 There was but one right thing in the world to do ;
 And I must do it. . . . Lord, have mercy ! Christ !
 Help through my womanhood : or I shall fail
 Yet, as I failed before ! . . . I could not speak—
 I could not speak for shame and misery,
 And terror of my sin, and of the things
 I knew were coming : but in heaven, in heaven !
 There we should meet, perhaps—and by that **time**
 I might be worthy of you once again—
 Of you, and of my God. . . . So I went out.

Will you hear more, and so forget the pain?
 And yet I dread to tell you what comes next;
 Your love will feel it all again for me.
 No! it is over; and the woe that's dead
 Rises next hour a glorious angel. Love!
 Say, shall I tell you? Ah! your lips are dry!
 To-morrow, when they come, we must entreat,
 And they will give you water. One to-day,
 A soldier, gave me water in a sponge
 Upon a reed, and said, 'Too fair! too young!
 She might have been a gallant soldier's wife!'
 And then I cried, 'I am a soldier's wife!
 A hero's!' And he smiled, but let me drink.
 God bless him for it!

So they led me back:

And as I went, a voice was in my ears
 Which rang through all the sunlight, and the breath
 And blaze of all the garden slopes below,
 And through the harvest-voices, and the moan
 Of cedar-forests on the cliffs above,
 And round the shining rivers, and the peaks
 Which hung beyond the cloud-bed of the west,
 And round the ancient stones about my feet.
 Out of all heaven and earth it rang, and cried,
 'My hand hath made all these. Am I too weak
 To give thee strength to say so?' Then my soul
 Spread like a clear blue sky within my breast,
 While all the people made a ring around,
 And in the midst the judge spoke smilingly—
 'Well! hast thou brought him to a better mind?'
 'No! He has brought me to a better mind!'—
 I cried, and said beside—I know not what—
 Words which I learnt from thee—I trust in God
 Nought fierce or rude—for was I not a girl
 Three months ago beneath my mother's roof?
 I thought of that. She might be there! I looked—
 She was not there! I hid my face and wept.
 And when I looked again, the judge's eye
 Was on me, cold and steady, deep in thought—
 'She knows what shame is still: so strip her.' 'Ah!
 I shrieked, 'Not that, Sir! Any pain! So young
 I am—a wife too—I am not my own,

But his—my husband's ! ' But they took my shawl,
And tore my tunic off, and there I stood
Before them all. . . . Husband ! you love me still ?
Indeed I pleaded ! Oh, shine out, kind moon,
And let me see him smile ! Oh ! how I prayed,
While some cried ' Shame ! ' and some, ' She is too
young ! '

And some mocked—ugly words : God shut my ears.
And yet no earthquake came to swallow me.
While all the court around, and walls, and roofs,
And all the earth and air were full of eyes,
Eyes, eyes, which scorched my limbs like burning flame,
Until my brain seemed bursting from my brow :
And yet no earthquake came ! And then I knew
This body was not yours alone, but God's—
His loan—He needed it : and after that
The worst was come, and any torture more
A change—a lightening ; and I did not shriek—
Once only—once, when first I felt the whip—
It coiled so keen around my side, and sent
A fire-flash through my heart which choked me—then
I shrieked—that once. The foolish echo rang
So far and long—I prayed you might not hear.
And then a mist, which hid the ring of eyes,
Swam by me, and a murmur in my ears
Of humming bees around the limes at home ;
And I was all alone with you and God.
And what they did to me I hardly know ;
I felt, and did not feel. Now I look back,
It was not after all so very sharp :
So do not pity me. It made me pray ;
Forget my shame in pain, and pain in you,
And you in God : and once, when I looked down,
And saw an ugly sight—so many wounds !
' What matter ? ' thought I. ' His dear eyes are dark ;
For them alone I kept these limbs so white—
A foolish pride ! As God wills now. 'Tis just.'
But then the judge spoke out in haste : ' She is mad,
Or fenced by magic arts ! She feels no pain ! '
He did not know I was on fire within :
Better he should not ; so his sin was less.
Then he cried fiercely, ' Take the slave away,

And crucify her by her husband's side !'
And at those words a film came on my face—
A sickening rush of joy—was that the end ?
That my reward ? I rose, and tried to go—
But all the eyes had vanished, and the judge ;
And all the buildings melted into mist :
So how they brought me here I cannot tell—
Here, here, by you, until the judgment-day,
And after that for ever and for ever !
Ah ! If I could but reach that hand ! One touch !
One finger tip, to send the thrill through me
I felt but yesterday !—No ! I can wait :—
Another body !—Oh, new limbs are ready,
Free, pure, instinct with soul through every nerve,
Kept for us in the treasures of God.
They will not mar the love they try to speak,
They will not fail my soul, as these have done !

Will you hear more ? Nay—you know all the rest :
Yet those poor eyes—alas ! they could not see
My waking, when you hung above me there
With hands outstretched to bless the penitent—
Your penitent—even like The Lord Himself—
I gloried in you !—like The Lord Himself !
Sharing His very sufferings, to the crown
Of thorns which they had put on that dear brow
To make you like Him—show you as you were !
I told them so ! I bid them look on you,
And see there what was the highest throne on earth—
The throne of suffering, where the Son of God
Endured and triumphed for them. But they laughed ;
All but one soldier, gray, with many scars ;
And he stood silent. Then I crawled to you,
And kissed your bleeding feet, and called aloud—
You heard me ! You know all ! I am at peace.
Peace, peace, as still and bright as is the moon
Upon your limbs, came on me at your smile,
And kept me happy, when they dragged me back
From that last kiss, and spread me on the cross,
And bound my wrists and ankles—Do not sigh :
I prayed, and bore it : and since they raised me up
My eyes have never left your face, my own, my own,

Nor will, till death comes ! . . .

Do I feel much pain ?

Not much. Not maddening. None I cannot bear.

It has become like part of my own life,

Or part of God's life in me—honor—bliss !

I dreaded madness, and instead comes rest ;

Rest deep and smiling, like a summer's night.

I should be easy, now, if I could move

I cannot stir. Ah God ! these shoots of fire

Through all my limbs ! Hush, selfish girl ! He hears you !

Who ever found the cross a pleasant bed ?

Yes ; I can bear it, love. Pain is no evil

Unless it conquers us. These little wrists, now—

You said, one blessed night, they were too slender,

Too soft and slender for a deacon's wife—

Perhaps a martyr's:—You forgot the strength

Which God can give. The cord has cut them through ;

And yet my voice has never faltered yet.

Oh ! do not groan, or I shall long and pray

That you may die : and you must not die yet.

Not yet—they told us we might live three days . . .

Two days for you to preach ! Two days to speak

Words which may wake the dead !

Hush ! is he sleeping ?

They say that men have slept upon the cross ;

So why not he ? . . . Thanks, Lord ! I hear him breathe :

And he will preach Thy word to-morrow !—save

Souls, crowds, for Thee ! And they will know his worth

Years hence—poor things, they know not what they do !

And crown him martyr ; and his name will ring

Through all the shores of earth, and all the stars

Whose eyes are sparkling through their tears to see

His triumph—Preacher ! Martyr !—Ah—and me ?—

If they must couple my poor name with his,

Let them tell all the truth—say how I loved him,

And tried to damn him by that love ! O Lord !

Returning good for evil ! and was this

The payment I deserved for such a sin ?

To hang here on my cross, and look at him

Until we kneel before Thy throne in heaven !

ON THE DEATH OF A CERTAIN JOURNAL *

So die, thou child of stormy dawn,
 Thou winter flower, forlorn of nurse ;
 Chilled early by the bigot's curse,
 The pedant's frown, the worldlings' yawn.

Fair death, to fall in teeming June,
 When every seed which drops to earth
 Takes root, and wins a second birth
 From steaming shower and gleaming moon.

Fall warm, fall fast, thou mellow rain ;
 Thou rain of God, make fat the land ;
 That roots which parch in burning sand
 May bud to flower and fruit again.

To grace, perchance, a fairer morn
 In mightier lands beyond the sea,
 While honor falls to such as we
 From hearts of heroes yet unborn.

Who in the light of fuller day,
 Of purer science, holier laws,
 Bless us, faint heralds of their cause,
 Dim beacons of their glorious way.

Failure? While tide-floods rise and boil
 Round cape and isle, in port and cove,
 Resistless, star-led from above :
 What though our tiny wave recoil?

EVERSLEY, 1852.

DOWN TO THE MOTHERS

LINGER no more, my beloved, by abbey and cell and
 cathedral ;
 Mourn not for holy ones mourning of old them who knew
 not the Father,
 Weeping with fast and scourge, when the bridegroom
 was taken from them.

* The *Christian Socialist*, started by the Council of Associates for promotion of Co-operation.

Drop back awhile through the years, to the warm rich
youth of the nations,
Childlike in virtue and faith, though childlike in passion
and pleasure,
Childlike still, and still near to their God, while the day-
spring of Eden
Lingered in rose-red rays on the peaks of Ionian moun-
tains.
Down to the mothers, as Faust went, I go, to the roots
of our manhood,
Mothers of us in our cradles ; of us once more in our
glory.
New-born, body and soul, in the great pure world which
shall be
In the renewing of all things, when man shall return to
his Eden
Conquering evil, and death, and shame, and the slander
of conscience—
Free in the sunshine of Godhead—and fearlessly smile on
his Father.
Down to the mothers I go—yet with thee still !—be with
me, thou purest !
Lead me, thy hand in my hand ; and the dayspring of
God go before us.
EVERSLEY, 1852.

TO MISS MITFORD

AUTHORESS OF 'OUR VILLAGE'

THE single eye, the daughter of the light ;
Well pleased to recognize in lowliest shade
Some glimmer of its parent beam, and made
By daily draughts of brightness, inly bright.
The taste severe, yet graceful, trained aright
In classic depth and clearness, and repaid
By thanks and honor from the wise and staid—
By pleasant skill to blame, and yet delight,
And high communion with the eloquent throng
Of those who purified our speech and song—

All these are yours. The same examples lure,
 You in each woodland, me on breezy moor—
 With kindred aim the same sweet path along,
 To knit in loving knowledge rich and poor.

EVERSLEY, 1853.

BALLAD OF EARL HALDAN'S DAUGHTER

It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
 She looked across the sea ;
 She looked across the water ;
 And long and loud laughed she :
 ' The locks of six princesses
 Must be my marriage fee,
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat !
 Who comes a wooing me ? '

It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
 She walked along the sand ;
 When she was aware of a knight so fair,
 Came sailing o the land.
 His sails were all of velvet,
 His mast of beaten gold,
And ' Hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat !
 Who saileth here so bold ? '

' The locks of five princesses
 I won beyond the sea ;
 I clipt their golden tresses,
 To fringe a cloak for thee.
 One handful yet is wanting,
 But one of all the tale ;
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat !
 Furl up thy velvet sail ! '

He leapt into the water,
 That rover young and bold ;
 He gript Earl Haldan's daughter,
 He clipt her locks of gold :

‘Go weep, go weep, proud maiden,
 The tale is full to-day.
 Now hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat !
 Sail Westward ho ! away !’

DEVONSHIRE, 1854.

From *Westward Ho !*

FRANK LEIGH'S SONG. A. D. 1586

AH tyrant Love, Megæra's serpents bearing,
 Why thus requite my sighs with venom'd smart ?
 Ah ruthless dove, the vulture's talons wearing,
 Why flesh them, traitress, in this faithful heart ?
 Is this my meed ? Must dragon's teeth alone
 In Venus' lawns by lovers' hands be sown ?

Nay, gentlest Cupid ; 'twas my pride undid me ;
 Nay, guiltless dove ; by mine own wound I fell.
 To worship, not to wed, Celestials bid me :
 I dreamt to mate in heaven, and wake in hell ;
 For ever doom'd, Ixion-like, to reel
 On mine own passion's ever-burning wheel.

DEVONSHIRE, 1854.

From *Westward Ho !*

ODE TO THE NORTH-EAST WIND

WELCOME, wild North-easter !
 Shame it is to see
 Odes to every zephyr ;
 Ne'er a verse to thee.
 Welcome, black North-easter !
 O'er the German foam ;
 O'er the Danish moorlands,
 From thy frozen home.
 Tired we are of summer,
 Tired of gaudy glare,
 Showers soft and steaming,
 Hot and breathless air.
 Tired of listless dreaming,

Through the lazy day :
 Jovial wind of winter
 Turns us out to play !
 Sweep the golden reed-beds ;
 Crisp the lazy dyke ;
 Hunger into madness
 Every plunging pike.
 Fill the lake with wild-fowl ;
 Fill the marsh with snipe ;
 While on dreary moorlands
 Lonely curlew pipe.
 Through the black fir-forest
 Thunder harsh and dry,
 Shattering down the snow-flakes
 Off the curdled sky.
 Hark ! The brave North-easter !
 Breast-high lies the scent,
 On by holt and headland,
 Over heath and bent.
 Chime, ye dappled darlings,
 Through the sleet and snow.
 Who can over-ride you ?
 Let the horses go !
 Chime, ye dappled darlings,
 Down the roaring blast ;
 You shall see a fox die
 Ere an hour be past.
 Go ! and rest to-morrow,
 Hunting in your dreams,
 While our skates are ringing
 O'er the frozen streams.
 Let the luscious South-wind
 Breath in lovers' sighs,
 While the lazy gallants
 Bask in ladies' eyes.
 What does he but soften
 Heart alike and pen ?
 'Tis the hard gray weather
 Breeds hard English men.
 What's the soft South-wester ?
 'Tis the ladies' breeze,
 Bringing home their true-loves

Out of all the seas :
 But the black North-easter,
 Through the snowstorm hurled,
 Drives our English hearts of oak
 Seaward round the world.
 Come, as came our fathers,
 Heralded by thee,
 Conquering from the eastward,
 Lords by land and sea.
 Come ; and strong within us
 Stir the Vikings' blood ;
 Bracing brain and sinew ;
 Blow, thou wind of God !

1854.

A FAREWELL

C. E. G.

My fairest child, I have no song to give you ;
 No lark could pipe in skies so dull and gray ;
 Yet, if you will, one quiet hint I'll leave you,
 For every day.

I'll tell you how to sing a clearer carol
 Than lark who hails the dawn or breezy down
 To earn yourself a purer poet's laurel
 Than Shakespeare's crown.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who can be clever ;
 Do lovely things, not dream them, all day long ;
 And so make Life, and Death, and that For Ever,
 One grand sweet song.

February 1, 1856.

To G. A. G.

A HASTY jest I once let fall—
 As jests are want to be, untrue—
 As if the sum of joy to you
 Were hunt and picnic, rout and ball.

Your eyes met mine : I did not blame ;
 You saw it : but I touched too near
 Some noble nerve ; a silent tear
 Spoke soft reproach, and lofty shame.

I do not wish those words unsaid.
 Unspoilt by praise and pleasure, you
 In that one look to woman grew,
 While with a child, I thought, I played.

Next to mine own beloved so long !
 I have not spent my heart in vain.
 I watched the blade ; I see the grain ;
 A woman's soul, most soft, yet strong.

EVERSLEY, 1856.

THE SOUTH WIND

A FISHERMAN'S BLESSINGS

O BLESSED drums of Aldershot !
 O blessed South-west train !
 O blessed, blessed Speaker's clock,
 All prophesying rain !

O blessed yaffil, laughing loud !
 O blessed falling glass !
 O blessed fan of cold gray cloud !
 O blessed smelling grass !

O bless'd South wind that toots his horn
 Through every hole and crack !
 I'm off at eight to-morrow morn,
 To bring *such* fishes back !

EVERSLEY, *April 1*, 1856.

THE INVITATION

TO TOM HUGHES

COME away with me, Tom,
Term and talk are done ;
My poor lads are reaping,
Busy every one.
Curates mind the parish,
Sweepers mind the courts ;
We'll away to Snowdon
For our ten days' sport ;
Fish the August evening
Till the eve is past,
Whoop like boys, at pounders
Fairly played and grassed.
When they cease to dimple,
Lunge, and swerve, and leap,
Then up over Siabod,
Choose our nest, and sleep.
Up a thousand feet, Tom,
Round the lion's head,
Find soft stones to leeward
And make up our bed.
Eat our bread and bacon,
Smoke the pipe of peace,
And, ere we be drowsy,
Give our boots a grease.
Homer's heroes did so,
Why not such as we ?
What are sheets and servants ?
Superfluity !
Pray for wives and children
Safe in slumber curled,
Then to chat till midnight
O'er this babbling world—
Of the workman's college,
Of the price of grain,
Of the tree of knowledge,
Of the chance of rain ;
If Sir A. goes Romeward,
If Miss B. sings true,

If the fleet comes homeward,
If the mare will do,—
Anything and everything—
Up there in the sky
Angels understand us,
And no 'saints' are by.
Down, and bathe at day-dawn
Tramp from lake to lake,
Washing brain and heart clean
Every step we take.
Leave to Robert Browning
Beggars, fleas, and vines ;
Leave to mournful Ruskin
Popish Apennines,
Dirty Stones of Venice
And his Gas-lamps Seven—
We've the stones of Snowdon
And the lamps of heaven.
Where's the mighty credit
In admiring Alps ?
Any goose sees 'glory'
In their 'Snowy scalps.'
Leave such signs and wonders
For the dullard brain,
As æsthetic brandy,
Opium and cayenne.
Give me Bramshill common
(St. John's harriers by),
Or the vale of Windsor,
England's golden eye.
Show me life and progress,
Beauty, health and man ;
Houses fair, trim gardens,
Turn where'er I can.
Or, if bored with 'High Art,'
And such popish stuff,
One's poor ear need airing,
Snowdon's high enough.
While we find God's signet
Fresh on English ground,
Why go gallivanting
With the nations round ?

Though we try no ventures
 Desperate or strange ;
 Feed on commonplaces
 In a narrow range ;
 Never sought for Franklin
 Round the frozen Capes ;
 Even, with Macdougall,*
 Bagged our brace of apes ;
 Never had our chance, Tom,
 In that black Redan ;
 Can't avenge poor Brereton
 Out in Sakarran ;
 Tho' we earn our bread, Tom,
 By the dirty pen,
 What we can we will be,
 Honest Englishmen.
 Do the work that's nearest,
 Though it's dull at whiles,
 Helping, when we meet them,
 Lamé dogs over stiles ;
 See in every hedgerow
 Marks of angels' feet,
 Epics in each pebble
 Underneath our feet ;
 Once a year, like schoolboys,
 Robin-Hooding go,
 Leaving fops and fogies
 A thousand feet below.

EVERSLEY, *August*, 1856.

THE FIND

YON sound's neither sheep-bell nor bark,
 They're running—they're running, Go hark !
 The sport may be lost by a moment's delay ;
 So whip up the puppies and scurry away.
 Dash down through the cover by dingle and dell,
 There's a gate at the bottom—I know it full well ;
 And they're running—they're running,
 Go hark !

* Bishop of Labuan, in Borneo.

They're running—they're running, Go hark
 One fence and we're out of the park ;
 Sit down in your saddles and race at the brook,
 Then smash at the bullfinch ; no time for a look ;
 Leave cravens and skirterers to dangle behind ;
 He's away for the moors in the teeth of the wind,
 And they're running—they're running,
 Go hark !

They're running—they're running, Go hark !
 Let them run on and run till it's dark !
 Well with them we are, and well with them we'll be,
 While there's wind in our horses and daylight to see :
 Then shog along homeward, chat over the fight,
 And hear in our dreams the sweet music all night
 Of—They're running—they're running,
 Go hark !

EVERSLEY, 1856.

FISHING SONG

TO J. A. FROUDE AND TOM HUGHES.

OH, Mr. Froude, how wise and good,
 To point us out this way to glory—
 They're no great shakes, those Snowdon Lakes,
 And all their pounders myth and story.
 Blow Snowdon ! What's Lake Gwynant to Killarney,
 Or spluttering Welsh to tender blarney, blarney, blarney ?

So Thomas Hughes, sir, if you choose,
 I'll tell you where we think of going,
 To swate and far o'er cliff and scar,
 Hear horns of Elfland faintly blowing ;
 Blow Snowdon ! There's a hundred lakes to try in,
 And fresh caught salmon daily, frying, frying, frying.

Geology and botany
 A hundred wonders shall diskiver,
 We'll flog and troll in strid and hole,
 And skim the cream of lake and river,

Blow Snowdon ! give me Ireland for my pennies,
Hurrah ! for salmon, grilse, and—Dennis, Dennis, Dennis !

EVERSLEY, 1856.

THE LAST BUCCANEER

Oh England is a pleasant place for them that's rich and
high,

But England is a cruel place for such poor folks as I ;
And such a port for mariners I ne'er shall see again
As the pleasant Isle of Avés, besides the Spanish main.

There were forty craft in Avés that were both swift and
stout,

All furnished well with small arms and cannons round
about ;

And a thousand men in Avés made laws so fair and free
To choose their valiant captains and obey them loyally.

Thence we sailed against the Spaniard with his hoards of
plate and gold,

Which he wrung with cruel tortures from Indian folk of
old ;

Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as hard as
stone,

Who flog men and keel-haul them, and starve them to the
bone.

Oh the palms grew high in Avés, and fruits that shone
like gold,

And the colibris and parrots they were gorgeous to behold ;
And the negro maids to Avés from bondage fast did flee,
To welcome gallant sailors, a-sweeping in from sea.

Oh sweet it was in Avés to hear the landward breeze,
A-swing with good tobacco in a net between the trees,
With a negro lass to fan you, while you listened to the
roar

Of the breakers on the reef outside, that never touched the
shore.

But Scripture saith, an ending to all fine things must be ;
So the King's ships sailed on Avés, and quite put down
were we.

All day we fought like bulldogs, but they burst the booms
at night ;

And I fled in a piragua, sore wounded, from the fight.

Nine days I floated starving, and a negro lass beside,
Till for all I tried to cheer her, the poor young thing she
died ;

But as I lay a gasping, a Bristol sail came by,
And brought me home to England here, to beg until I die.

And now I am old and going—I'm sure I can't tell where ;
One comfort is, this world's so hard, I can't be worse off
there :

If I might but be a sea-dove, I'd fly across the main,
To the pleasant Isle of Avés, to look at it once again.

EVERSLEY, 1857.

THE KNIGHT'S RETURN

Hark ! hark ! hark !
The lark sings high in the dark.
The were-wolves mutter, the night hawks moan,
The raven croaks from the Raven-stone ;
What care I for his boding groan,
Riding the moorland to come to mine own ?
Hark ! hark ! hark !
The lark sings high in the dark.

Hark ! hark ! hark !
The lark sings high in the dark.
Long have I wander'd by land and by sea,
Long have I ridden by moorland and lea ;
Yonder she sits with my babe on her knee,
Sits at the window and watches for me !
Hark ! hark ! hark !
The lark sings high in the dark.

WRITTEN FOR MUSIC,
1857.

PEN-Y-GWRYDD

TO TOM HUGHES, ESQ.

There is no inn in Snowdon which is not awful dear,
 Excepting Pen-y-gwrydd (you can't pronounce it, dear),
 Which standeth in the meeting of noble valleys three—
 One is the vale of Gwynant, so well beloved by me,
 One goes to Capel-Curig, and I can't mind its name,
 And one it is Llanberris Pass, which all men knows the
 same ;
 Between which radiations vast mountains does arise,
 As full of tarns as sieves of holes, in which big fish will
 rise,
 That is, just one day in the year, if you be there, my boy,
 Just about ten o'clock at night ; and then I wish you joy.
 Now to this Pen-y-gwrydd inn I purposeth to write,
 (And the post town out of Froude, for I can't mind it
 quite),
 And to engage a room or two, for let us say a week,
 For fear of gents, and Manichees, and reading parties
 meek,
 And there to live like fighting-cocks at almost a bob a
 day,
 And arterwards toward the sea make tracks and cut away,
 All for to catch the salmon bold in Aberglaslyn pool,
 And work the flats in Traeth-Mawr, and will, or I'm a
 fool.
 And that's my game, which if you like, respond to me by
 post ;
 But I fear it will not last, my son, a thirteen days at most.
 Flies is no object ; I can tell some three or four will do,
 And John Jones, Clerk, he knows the rest, and ties and
 sells 'em too.
 Besides of which I have no more to say, leastwise just
 now,
 And so, goes to my children's school and 'umbly makes
 my bow.

EVERSLEY, 1857.

ODE

ON THE INSTALLATION

OF THE

DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, CHANCELLOR OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, 1862.*

HENCE a while, severer Muses ;
Spare your slaves till drear October.
Hence ; for Alma Mater chooses
Not to be for ever sober :
But, like stately matron gray,
Calling child and grandchild round her,
Will for them at least be gay ;
Share for once their holiday ;
And, knowing she will sleep the sounder,
Cheerier-hearted on the morrow
Rise to grapple care and sorrow,
Grandly leads the dance adown, and joins the children's
play.

So go, for in your places
Already, as you see,

(Her tears for some deep sorrow scarcely dried),
Venus holds court among her sinless graces,
With many a nymph from many a park and lea.
She, pensive, waits the merrier faces
Of those your wittier sisters three,
O'er jest and dance and song who still preside,
To cheer her in this merry-mournful tide ;
And bids us, as she smiles or sighs,
Tune our fancies by her eyes.

Then let the young be glad,
Fair girl and gallant lad,
And sun themselves to-day
By lawn and garden gay ;
'Tis play befits the noon
Of rosy-girdled June :
Who dare frown if heaven shall smile ?
Blest, who can forget a while ;

* This Ode was set to Professor Sterndale Bennet's music, and sung in the Senate House, Cambridge, on the Day of Installation.

The world before them, and above
 The light of universal love.
 Go, then, let the young be gay ;
 From their heart as from their dress
 Let darkness and let mourning pass away,
 While we the staid and worn look on and bless.

Health to courage firm and high !
 Health to Granta's chivalry !
 Wisely finding, day by day,
 Play in toil, and toil in play.
 Granta greets them, gliding down
 On by park and spire and town ;
 Humming mills and golden meadows,
 Barred with elm and poplar shadows ;
 Giant groves, and learned halls ;
 Holy fanes and pictured walls.
 Yet she bides not here ; around
 Lies the Muses' sacred ground.
 Most she lingers, where below
 Gliding wherries come and go ;
 Stalwart footsteps shake the shores ;
 Rolls the pulse of stalwart oars ;
 Rings aloft the exultant cry
 For the bloodless victory.
 There she greets the sports, which breed
 Valiant lads for England's need ;
 Wisely finding, day by day,
 Play in toil, and toil in play.
 Health to courage, firm and high !
 Health to Granta's chivalry !

Yet stay a while, severer Muses, stay,
 For you, too, have your rightful parts to-day.
 Known long to you, and known through you to fame,
 Are Chatsworth's halls, and Cavendish's name.
 You too, then, Alma Mater calls to greet
 A worthy patron for your ancient seat ;
 And bid her sons from him example take,
 Of learning purely sought for learning's sake,
 Of worth unboastful, power in duty spent ;
 And see, fulfilled in him, her high intent.

Come, Euterpe, wake thy choir ;
 Fit thy notes to our desire.
 Long may he sit the chiefest here,
 Meet us and greet us, year by year ;
 Long inherit, sire and son,
 All that their race has wrought and won,
 Since that great Cavendish came again,
 Round the world and over the main,
 Breasting the Thames with his mariners bold,
 Past good Queen Bess's palace of old ;
 With jewel and ingot packed in his hold,
 And sails of damask and cloth of gold ;
 While never a sailor-boy on board
 But was decked as brave as a Spanish lord,
 With the spoils he had won
 In the Isles of the Sun,
 And the shores of Fairy-land,
 And yet held for the crown of the goodly show,
 That queenly smile from the Palace window,
 And that wave of a queenly hand.

 Yes, let the young be gay,
 And sun themselves to-day ;—
 And from their hearts, as from their dress,
 Let mourning pass away.
 But not from us, who watch our years fast fleeting,
 And snatching as they flee, fresh fragments of our being.
 Can we forget one friend,
 Can we forget one face,
 Which cheered us toward our end,
 Which nerved us for our race ?
 Oh sad to toil, and yet forego
 One presence which has made us know
 To Godlike souls how deep our debt !
 We would not, if we could, forget.

 Severer Muses, linger yet ;
 Speak out for us one pure and rich regret.
 Thou, Clio, who, with awful pen,
 Gravest great names upon the hearts of men,
 Speak of a fate beyond our ken ;

A gem late found and lost too soon ; *
 A sun gone down at highest noon ;
 A tree from Odin's ancient root,
 Which bore for men the ancient fruit,
 Counsel, and faith and scorn of wrong,
 And cunning lore, and soothing song,
 Snapt in mid-growth, and leaving unaware
 The flock unsheltered and the pasture bare
 Nay, let us take what God shall send,
 Trusting bounty without end.
 God ever lives ; and Nature,
 Beneath His high dictature,
 Hale and teeming, can replace
 Strength by strength, and grace by grace,
 Hope by hope, and friend by friend :
 Trust ; and take what God shall send.

So shall Alma Mater see
 Daughters fair and wise
 Train new lands of liberty
 Under stranger skies ;
 Spreading round the teeming earth
 English science, manhood, worth.

1862.

SONGS FROM 'THE WATER-BABIES'

THE TIDE RIVER

CLEAR and cool, clear and cool,
 By laughing shallow, and dreaming pool ;
 Cool and clear, cool and clear,
 By shining shingle, and foaming weir ;
 Under the crag where the ouzel sings,
 And the ivied wall where the church-bell rings,
 Undefined, for the undefined ;
 Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

Dank and foul, dank and foul,
 By the smoky town in its murky cowl ;

* His Royal Highness the Prince Consort, Chancellor of Cambridge University.

Foul and dank, foul and dank,
 By wharf and sewer and slimy bank ;
 Darker and darker the farther I go,
 Baser and baser the richer I grow ;
 Who dare sport with the sin-defiled ?
 Shrink from me, turn from me, mother and child.

Strong and free, strong and free,
 The floodgates are open, away to the sea.
 Free and strong, free and strong,
 Cleansing my streams as I hurry along
 To the golden sands, and the leaping bar,
 And the taintless tide that awaits me afar,
 As I lose myself in the infinite main,
 Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned again.
 Undefiled, for the undefiled ;
 Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

From *The Water-Babies*,
 EVERSLEY, 1862.

YOUNG AND OLD

WHEN all the world is young, lad,
 And all the trees are green ;
 And every goose a swan, lad,
 And every lass a queen ;
 Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
 And round the world away ;
 Young blood must have its course, lad,
 And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
 And all the trees are brown ;
 And all the sport is stale, lad,
 And all the wheels run down ;
 Creep home, and take your place there,
 The spent and maimed among :
 God grant you find one face there,
 You loved when all was young.

From *The Water-Babies*.
 1862.

THE SUMMER SEA

SOFT soft wind, from out the sweet south sliding,
 Waft thy silver cloud webs athwart the summer sea ;
 Thin thin threads of mist on dewy fingers twining
 Weave a veil of dappled gauze to shade my babe and me.

Deep deep Love, within thine own abyſs abiding,
 Pour thyself abroad, O Lord, on earth and air and sea ;
 Worn weary hearts within Thy holy temple hiding,
 Shield from sorrow, sin, and shame my helpless babe
 and me.

From *The Water-Babies*.
 1862.

MY LITTLE DOLL

I ONCE had a sweet little doll, dears,
 The prettiest doll in the world ;
 Her cheeks were so red and so white, dears,
 And her hair was so charmingly curled.
 But I lost my poor little doll, dears,
 As I played in the heath one day ;
 And I cried for more than a week, dears,
 But I never could find where she lay.

I found my poor little doll, dears,
 As I played in the heath one day :
 Folks say she is terribly changed, dears,
 For her paint is all washed away,
 And her arms trodden off by the cows, dears,
 And her hair not the least bit curled :
 Yet for old sakes' sake she is still, dears,
 The prettiest doll in the world.

From *The Water-Babies*.
 EVERSLEY, 1862.

THE KNIGHT'S LEAP

A LEGEND OF ALTENAHK

'So the foemen have fired the gate, men of mine;
And the water is spent and gone?
Then bring me a cup of the red Ahr-wine:
I never shall drink but this one.

'And reach me my harness, and saddle my horse,
And lead him me round to the door:
He must take such a leap to-night perforce,
As horse never took before.

'I have fought my fight, I have lived my life,
I have drunk my share of wine;
From Trier to Coln there was never a knight
Led a merrier life than mine.

'I have lived by the saddle for years two score;
And if I must die on tree,
Then the old saddle tree, which has borne me of yore,
Is the properest timber for me.

'So now to show bishop, and burgher, and priest,
How the Alternahr hawk can die:
If they smoke the old falcon out of his nest,
He must take to his wings and fly.'

He harnessed himself by the clear moonshine,
And he mounted his horse at the door;
And he drained such a cup of the red Ahr-wine,
As man never drained before.

He spurred the old horse, and he held him tight,
And he leapt him out over the wall;
Out over the cliff, out into the night,
Three hundred feet of fall.

They found him next morning below in the glen,
With never a bone in him whole—
A mass or a prayer, now, good gentlemen,
For such a bold rider's soul.

THE SONG OF THE LITTLE BALTUNG

A. D. 395

A HARPER came over the Danube so wide,
And he came into Alaric's hall,
And he sang the song of the little Baltung
To him and his heroes all.

How the old old Balt and the young young Balt
Rode out of Caucaland,
With the royal elephant's trunk on helm
And the royal lance in hand.

Thuringer heroes, counts and knights,
Pricked proud in their meinie ;
For they were away to the great Kaiser,
In Byzant beside the sea.

And when they came to the Danube so wide
They shouted from off the shore,
'Come over, come over, ye Roman slaves,
And ferry your masters o'er.'

And when they came to Adrian's burgh,
With its towers so smooth and high,
'Come out, come out, ye Roman knaves,
And see your lords ride by.'

But when they came to the long long walls
That stretch from sea to sea,
That old old Balt let down his chin,
And a thoughtful man grew he.

'Oh oft have I scoffed at brave Fridigern,
But never will I scoff more,
If these be the walls which kept him out
From the Micklegard there on the shore.'

Then out there came the great Kaiser,
With twice ten thousand men ;
But never a Thuring was coward enough
To wish himself home again.

‘Bow down, thou rebel, old Athanarich,
And beg thy life this day ;
The Kaiser is lord of all the world,
And who dare say him nay ?’

‘I never came out of Caucaland
To beg for less nor more ;
But to see the pride of the great Kaiser,
In his Micklegard here by the shore.

‘I never came out of Caucaland
To bow to mortal wight,
But to shake the hand of the great Kaiser,
And God defend my right.’

He shook his hand, that cunning Kaiser
And he kissed him courteously,
And he has ridden with Athanarich
That wonder-town to see.

He showed him his walls of marble white—
A mile o’erhead they shone ;
Quoth the Balt, ‘Who would leap into that garden,
King Siegfried’s boots must own.’

He showed him his engines of arismetrick
And his wells of quenchless flame,
And his flying rocks, that guarded his walls
From all that against him came.

He showed him his temples and pillared halls,
And his streets of houses high ;
And his watch-towers tall, where his star-gazers
Sit reading the signs of the sky.

He showed him his ships with their hundred oars,
And their sides like a castle wall,
That fetch home the plunder of all the world,
At the Kaiser’s beck and call.

He showed him all nations of every tongue
That are bred beneath the sun,
How they flowed together in Micklegard street
As the brooks flow all into one.

He showed him the shops of the china ware,
And of silk and sendal also,
And he showed him the baths and the waterpipes
On arches aloft that go.

He showed him ostrich and unicorn,
Ape, lion, and tiger keen ;
And elephants wise roared ' Hail Kaiser ! '
As though they had Christians been.

He showed him the hoards of the dragons and trolls,
Rare jewels and heaps of gold—
' Hast thou seen, in all thy hundred years,
Such as these, thou king so old ? '

Now that cunning Kaiser was a scholar wise,
And could of gramarye,
And he cast a spell on that old old Balt,
Till lowly and meek spake he.

' Oh oft have I heard of the Micklegard,
What I held for chapmen's lies :
But now do I know of the Micklegard,
By the sight of mine own eyes.

' Woden in Valhalla,
But thou on earth art God ;
And he that dare withstand thee, Kaiser,
On his own head lies his blood.'

Then out and spake that little Baltung,
Rode at the king's right knee,
Quoth ' Fridigern slew false Kaiser Valens,
And he died like you or me.'

' And who art thou, thou pretty bold boy,
Rides at the king's right knee ? '
' Oh I am the Baltung, boy Alaric,
And as good a man as thee.'

' As good as me, thou pretty bold boy,
With down upon thy chin ? '
' Oh a spae-wife laid a doom on me,
The best of thy realm to win.'

‘If thou be so fierce, thou little wolf cub
Or ever thy teeth be grown ;
Then I must guard my two young sons
Lest they should lose their own.’

‘Oh, it’s I will guard your two lither lads,
In their burgh beside the sea,
And it’s I will prove true man to them
If they will prove true to me.

‘But it’s you must warn your two lither lads,
And warn them bitterly,
That if I shall find them two false Kaisers,
High hanged they both shall be.’

Now they are gone into the Kaiser’s palace
To eat the peacock fine,
And they are gone into the Kaiser’s palace
To drink the good Greek wine.

The Kaiser alone, and the old old Balt,
They sat at the cedar board ;
And round them served on the bended knee
Full many a Roman lord.

‘What ails thee, what ails thee, friend Athanarich ?
What makes thee look so pale ?’

‘I fear I am poisoned, thou cunning Kaiser,
For I feel my heart-strings fail.

‘Oh would I had kept that great great oath
I swore by the horse’s head,
I would never set foot on Roman ground
Till the day that I lay dead.

‘Oh would I were home in Caucaland,
To hear my harpers play,
And to drink my last of the nut-brown ale,
While I gave the gold rings away.

‘Oh would I were home in Caucaland,
To hear the Gothmen’s horn,
And watch the wagons, and brown brood mares
And the tents where I was born.

‘But now I must die between four stone walls
In Byzant beside the sea :
And as thou shalt deal with my little Baltung,
So God shall deal with thee.’

The Kaiser he purged himself with oaths,
And he buried him royally,
And he set on his barrow an idol of gold,
Where all Romans must bow the knee.

And now the Goths are the Kaiser’s men,
And guard him with lance and sword,
And the little Baltung is his sworn son-at-arms,
And eats at the Kaiser’s board.

And the Kaiser’s two sons are two false white lads
That a clerk may beat with cane.
The clerk that should beat that little Baltung
Would never sing mass again.

Oh the gates of Rome they are steel without,
And beaten gold within :
But they shall fly wide to the little Baltung .
With the down upon his chin.

Oh the fairest flower in the Kaiser’s garden
Is Rome and Italian land :
But it all shall fall to the little Baltung
When he shall take lance in hand.

And when he is parting the plunder of Rome
He shall pay for this song of mine,
Neither maiden nor land, neither jewel nor gold,
But one cup of Italian wine.

EVERSLEY, 1864.

ON THE DEATH OF LEOPOLD, KING OF THE
BELGIANS *

A KING is dead ! Another master mind
Is summoned from the world-wide council hall.
Ah, for some seer, to say what lurks behind—
To read the mystic writing on the wall !

Be still, fond man : nor ask thy fate to know.
Face bravely what each God-sent moment brings.
Above thee rules in love, through weal and woe,
Guiding thy kings and thee, the King of kings.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
November 10, 1865.

EASTER WEEK

(WRITTEN FOR MUSIC TO BE SUNG AT A PARISH **INDUSTRIAL**
EXHIBITION)

SEE the land, her Easter keeping,
Rises as her Maker rose.
Seeds, so long in darkness sleeping,
Burst at last from winter snows.
Earth with heaven above rejoices ;
Fields and gardens hail the spring ;
Shaughs and woodlands rings with voices,
While the wild birds build and sing.

You, to whom your Maker granted
Powers to those sweet birds unknown,
Use the craft by God implanted ;
Use the reason not your own.
Here, while heaven and earth rejoices,
Each his Easter tribute bring—
Work of fingers, chant of voices,
Like the birds who build and sing.

EVERSLEY, 1867,

* Impromptu lines written in the album of the Crown Prince of Ger-
many

DRIFTING AWAY

A FRAGMENT

THEY drift away. Ah, God ! they drift forever.
 I watch the stream sweep onward to the sea,
 Like some old battered buoy upon a roaring river,
 Round whom the tide-waifs hang—then drift to sea

I watch them drift—the old familiar faces,
 Who fished and rode with me, by stream and wold,
 Till ghosts, not men, fill old beloved places,
 And, ah ! the land is rank with churchyard mold.

I watch them drift—the youthful aspirations,
 Shores, landmarks, beacons, drift alike.

I watch them drift—the poets and the statesmen ;
 The very streams run upward from the sea.

Yet overhead the boundless arch of heaven
 Still fades to night, still blazes into day.

Ah, God ! My God ! Thou wilt not drift away.

November, 1867.

CHRISTMAS DAY

How will it dawn, the coming Christmas Day ?
 A northern Christmas, such as painters love,
 And kinsfolk, shaking hands but once a year,
 And dames who tell old legends by the fire ?
 Red sun, blue sky, white snow, and pearled ice,
 Keen ringing air, which sets the blood on fire,
 And makes the old men merry with the young,
 Through the short sunshine, through the longer night ?
 Or southern Christmas, dark and dank with mist,
 And heavy with the scent of steaming leaves,

And rosebuds mouldering on the dripping porch ;
One twilight, without rise or set of sun,
Till beetles drone along the hollow lane,
And round the leafless hawthorns, flitting bats
Hawk the pale moths of winter? Welcome then
At best, the flying gleam, the flying shower,
The rain-pools glittering on the long white roads,
And shadows sweeping on from down to down
Before the salt Atlantic gale : yet come
In whatsoever garb, or gay, or sad,
Come fair, come foul, 'twill still be Christmas Day.

How will it dawn, the coming Christmas Day?
To sailors lounging on the lonely deck
Beneath the rushing trade-wind? Or to him,
Who by some noisome harbor of the East,
Watches swarth arms roll down the precious bales,
Spoils of the tropic forests ; year by year
Amid the din of heathen voices, groaning
Himself half heathen? How to those—brave hearts !
Who toil with laden loins and sinking stride
Beside the bitter wells of treeless sands
Toward the peaks which flood the ancient Nile,
To free a tyrant's captives? How to those—
New patriarchs of the new-found underworld—
Who stand, like Jacob, on the virgin lawns,
And count their flocks' increase? To them that day
Shall dawn in glory, and solstitial blaze
Of midsummer sun : to them that morn,
Gay flowers beneath their feet, gay birds aloft,
Shall tell of nought but summer : but to them,
Ere yet, unwarned by carol or by chime,
They spring into the saddle, thrills may come
From that great heart of Christendom which beats
Round all the worlds ; and gracious thoughts of youth ;
Of steadfast folk, who worship God at home ;
Of wise words, learnt beside their mothers' knee ;
Of innocent faces upturned once again
In awe and joy to listen to the tale
Of God made man, and in a manger laid—
May soften, purify, and raise the soul
From selfish cares, and growing lust of gain,
And phantoms of this dream which some call life,

Toward the eternal facts ; for here or there,
 Sumner or winter, t'will be Christmas Day.

Blest day, which aye reminds us, year by year,
 What 'tis to be a man : to curb and spurn
 The tyrant in us ; that ignoble self
 Which boasts, not loathes, its likeness to the brute,
 And owns no good save ease, no ill save pain,
 No purpose, save its share in that wild war
 In which through countless ages, living things
 Compete in internecine greed.—Ah God !
 Are we as creeping things, which have no Lord ?
 That we are brutes, great God, we know too well ;
 Apes daintier-featured : silly birds who flaunt
 Their plumes unheeding to the fowler's step ;
 Spiders, who catch with paper, not with webs ;
 Tigers, who slay with cannon and sharp steel,
 Instead of teeth and claws ;—all these we are.
 Are we no more than these, save in degree ?
 No more than these ; and born but to compete—
 To envy and devour, like beast or herb ;
 Mere fools of nature ; puppets of strong lusts,
 Taking the sword, to perish with the sword
 Upon the universal battle-field,
 Even as the things upon the moor outside ?

The heath eats up green grass and delicate flowers,
 The pine eats up the heath, the grub the pine,
 The finch the grub, the hawk the silly finch ;
 And man, the mightiest of all beasts of prey,
 Eats what he lists ; the strong eat up the weak,
 The many eat the few ; great nations, small ;
 And he who cometh in the name of all—
 He, greediest, triumphs by the greed of all ;
 And, armed by his own victims, eats up all :
 While ever out of the eternal heavens
 Looks patient down the great magnanimous God,
 Who, maker of all worlds, did sacrifice
 All to himself? Nay, but Himself to one :
 Who taught mankind on that first Christmas Day,
 What 'twas to be a man ; to give, not take ;
 To serve, not rule ; to nourish, not devour ;
 To help, not crush ; if need, to die, not live.

Oh blessed day, which givest the eternal life
 To self, and sense, and all the brute within ;
 Oh, come to us, amid this war of life ;
 To hall and hovel, come ; to all who toil
 In senate, shop, or study ; and to those
 Who, sundered by the wastes of half a world,
 Ill-warned, and sorely tempted, ever face
 Nature's brute powers, and men unmanned to brutes—
 Come to them, blest and blessing, Christmas Day.
 Tell them once more the tale of Bethlehem ;
 The kneeling shepherds, and the Babe Divine :
 And keep them men indeed, fair Christmas Day.

EVERSLEY, 1868.

SEPTEMBER 21, 1870*

SPEAK low, speak little ; who may sing
 While yonder cannon-thunders boom ?
 Watch, shuddering, what each day may bring :
 Nor ' pipe amid the crack of doom.'

And yet—the pines sing overhead,
 The robins by the alder-pool,
 The bees about the garden-bed,
 The children dancing home from school.

And ever at the loom of Birth
 The mighty Mother weaves and sings :
 She weaves—fresh robes for mangled earth ;
 She sings—fresh hopes for desperate things.

And thou, too : if through Nature's calm
 Some strain of music touch thine ears,
 Accept and share that soothing balm,
 And sing, though choked with pitying tears.

EVERSLEY, 1868.

* Time of the Franco-Prussian War.

THE MANGO-TREE

He wiled me through the furzy croft ;
He wiled me down the sandy lane.
He told his boy's love, soft and oft,
Until I told him mine again.

We married, and we sailed the main ;
A soldier, and a soldier's wife.
We march'd through many a burning plain ;
We sighed for many a gallant life.

But his—God kept it safe from harm.
He toiled, and dared, and earned command ;
And those three stripes upon his arm
Were more to me than gold or land.

Sure he would win some great renown :
Our lives were strong, our hearts were high.
One night the fever struck him down.
I sat, and stared, and saw him die.

I had his children—one, two, three.
One week I had them, blithe and sound.
The next—beneath this mango-tree,
By him in barrack burying-ground.

I sit beneath the mango-shade ;
I live my five years' life all o'er—
Round yonder stems his children played ;
He mounted guard at yonder door.

'Tis I, not they, am gone and dead.
They live ; they know ; they feel ; they see.
Their spirits light the golden shade
Beneath the giant mango-tree.

All things, save I, are full of life :
The minas, pluming velvet breast ;
The monkeys, in their foolish strife ;
The swooping hawks, the swinging nests ;

The lizards basking on the soil,
 The butterflies who sun their wings ;
 The bees about their household toil,
 They live, they love, the blissful things.

Each tender purple mango-shoot,
 That folds and droops so bashful down ;
 It lives ; it sucks some hidden root ;
 It rears at last a broad green crown.

It blossoms ; and the children cry—
 ‘ Watch when the mango-apples fall.’
 It lives : but rootless, fruitless, I—
 I breathe and dream ;—and that is all.

Thus am I dead : yet cannot die :
 But still within my foolish brain
 There hangs a pale blue evening sky ;
 A furzy croft ; a sandy lanc.

1870.

THE PRIEST'S HEART

It was Sir John, the fair young Priest,
 He strode up off the strand ;
 But seven fisher maidens he left behind
 All dancing hand in hand.

He came unto the wise wife's house :
 ‘ Now, Mother, to prove your art ;
 To charm May Carleton's merry blue eyes
 Out of a young man's heart.’

‘ My son, you went for a holy man,
 Whose heart was set on high ;
 Go sing in your psalter, and read in your books ;
 Man's love fleets lightly by.’

‘ I had liever to talk with May Carleton,
 Than with all the saints in Heaven ;
 I had liever to sit by May Carleton
 Than climb the spherés seven.

'I have watched and fasted, early and late,
I have prayed to all above ;
But I find no cure save churchyard mould
For the pain which men call love.'

'Now Heaven forefend that ill grow worse :
Enough that ill be ill.
I know of a spell to draw May Carleton,
And bend her to your will.'

If thou didst that which thou canst not do,
Wise woman though thou be,
I would run and run till I buried myself
In the surge of yonder sea.

'Scathless for me are maid and wife,
And scathless shall they bide.
Yet charm me May Carleton's eyes from the heart
That aches in my left side.'

She charmed him with the white witchcraft,
She charmed him with the black,
But he turned his fair young face to the wall,
Till she heard his heart-strings crack.

1870.

'QU'EST QU'IL DIT' *

Espion ailé de la jeune amante
De l'ombre des palmiers pourquoi ce cri ?
Laisse en paix le beau garçon plaider et vaincre—
Pourquoi, pourquoi demander 'Qu'est qu'il dit?'

'Qu'est qu'il dit?' Ce que tu dis toi-même
Chaque mois de ce printemps éternel ;
Ce que disent les papillons qui s'entre-baisent,
Ce que dit tout bel jeun être à toute belle.

Importun ! Attende quelques lustres :
Quand les souvenirs l'emmèneront ici—
Mère, grand'mère pale, lasse, et fidèle,
Demande mais doucement—'Et le vieillard,
Qu'est qu'il dit?'

TRINIDAD, *January 10, 1870.*

The Qu'est qu'il dit is a Tropical bird.

THE LEGEND OF LA BREA*

DOWN beside the loathly Pitch Lake,
 In the stately Morichal,†
 Sat an ancient Spanish Indian,
 Peering through the columns tall.

Watching vainly for the flashing
 Of the jewelled colibris ;‡
 Listening vainly for their humming
 Round the honey-blossomed trees.

‘ Few,’ he sighed, ‘ they come, and fewer,
 To the cocorité § bowers ;
 Murdered, madly, through the forests
 Which of yore were theirs—and ours.

By there came a negro hunter,
 Lithe and lusty, sleek and strong,
 Rolling round his sparkling eyeballs,
 As he loped and lounged along.

Rusty firelock on his shoulder ;
 Rusty cutlass on his thigh ;
 Never jollier British subject
 Rollicked underneath the sky.

British law to give him safety,
 British fleets to guard his shore,
 And a square of British freehold—
 He had all we have, and more.

* This myth about the famous Pitch Lake of Trinidad was told almost word for word to a M. Joseph by an aged half-caste Indian who went by the name of Señor Trinidad. The manners and customs which the ballad describes, and the cruel and dangerous destruction of the beautiful birds of Trinidad, are facts which may be easily verified by any one who will take the trouble to visit the West Indies.

† A magnificent wood of the Mauritia Fanpalm, on the south shore of the Pitch Lake.

‡ Humming-birds.

§ Maximiliana palms.

Fattening through the endless summer,
 Like his own provision ground,
 He had reached the summum bonum
 Which our latest wits have found.

So he thought ; and in his hammock
 Gnawed his junk of sugar-cane,
 Toasted plantains at the fire-stick,
 Gnawed, and dozed, and gnawed again.

Had a wife in his ajoupa *—
 Or, at least, what did instead ;
 Children, too, who died so early,
 He'd no need to earn their bread.

Never stole, save what he needed,
 From the Crown woods round about ;
 Never lied, except when summoned—
 Let the warden find him out.

Never drank, except at market ;
 Never beat his sturdy mate ;
 She could hit as hard as he could,
 And had just as hard a pate.

Had no care for priest nor parson,
 Hope of heaven nor fear of hell ;
 And in all his views of nature
 Held with Comte and Peter Bell.

Healthy, happy, silly, kindly,
 Neither care nor toil had he,
 Save to work an hour at sunrise,
 And then hunt the colibri.

Not a bad man ; not a good man :
 Scarce a man at all, one fears,
 If the Man be that within us
 Which is born of fire and tears.

* Hut of timber and palm-leaves.

Round the palm-stems, round the creepers,
 Flashed a feathered jewel past,
 Ruby-crested, topaz-throated,
 Plucked the cocorité bast,

Plucked the fallen ceiba-cotton,*
 Whirred away to build his nest,
 Hung at last, with happy humming,
 Round some flower he fancied best.

Up then went the rusty muzzle,
 ‘Dat de tenth I shot to-day :’
 But out sprang the Indian shouting,
 Balked the negro of his prey.

‘Eh, you Señor Trinidad !
 What dis new ondacent plan ?
 Spoil a genl’mán’s chance ob shooting ?
 I as good as any man.

‘Dese not your woods ; dese de Queen’s wood,
 You seem not know whar you ar,
 Gibbin’ yuself dese buckra airs here,
 You black Indian Papist ! Dar !’

Stately, courteous, stood the Indian ;
 Pointed through the palm-tree shade :
 ‘Does the gentleman of color
 Know how yon Pitch Lake was made ?’

Grinned the negro, grinned and trembled—
 Through his nerves a shudder ran—
 Saw a snake-like eye that held him ;
 Saw—he’d met an Obeah man.

Saw a fêdish—such a bottle—
 Buried at his cottage door ;
 Toad and spider, dirty water,
 Rusty nails, and nine charms more.

* From the *Eriodendron*, or giant silk-cotton.

Saw in vision such a cock's head
 In the path—and it was white !
 Saw Brinvilliers * in his pottage :
 Faltered, cold and damp with fright.

Fearful is the chance of poison :
 Fearful, too, the great unknown :
 Magic brings some positivists
 Humbly on their marrow-bone.

Like the wedding-guest enchanted,
 There he stood, a trembling cur ;
 While the Indian told his story,
 Like the Ancient Mariner.

Told how—‘ Once that loathly Pitch Lake
 Was a garden bright and fair ;
 How the Chaymas off the mainland
 Built their palm ajoupas there.

‘ How they throve, and how they fattened,
 Hale and happy, safe and strong ;
 Passed the livelong days in feasting ;
 Passed the nights in dance and song.

’Till they cruel grew, and wanton :
 Till they killed the colibris.
 Then outspake the great Good Spirit,
 Who can see through all the trees.

‘ Said—“ And what have I not sent you,
 Wanton Chaymas, many a year ?
 Lapp, † agouti, ‡ cachicame, §
 Quenc || and guazu-pita deer.

‘ “ Fish I sent you, sent you turtle,
 Chip-chip, ¶ conch, flamingo red,
 Woodland pauí, ** horned screamer, ††
 And blue ramier ‡‡ overhead.

* *Spigelia anthelmia*, a too-well-known poison-plant.

† *Cœlogenys Paca*. ‡ Wild cavy.

|| Peccary hog.

†† *Palamedea*.

¶ *Trigonia*.

‡‡ Dove.

§ Armadillo.

** Penelope.

‘ “Plums from balata * and mombin, †
 Tania, ‡ manioc, § water-vine ; ||
 Let you fell my slim manacques, ¶
 Tap my sweet morichè wine.**

‘ “Sent rich plantains †† food of angels ;
 Rich ananas, †† food of kings ;
 Grudged you none of all my treasures :
 Save these lovely useless things.”

‘ But the Chaymas’ ears were deafened ;
 Blind their eyes, and could not see
 How a blissful Indian’s spirit
 Lived in every colibri.

‘ Lived, forgetting toil and sorrow,
 Ever fair and ever new ;
 Whirling round the dear old woodland,
 Feeding on the honey-dew.

‘ Till one evening roared the earthquake :
 Monkeys howled, and parrots screamed :
 And the Guaraons at morning
 Gathered here, as men who dreamed.

‘ Sunk were gardens, sunk ajoupas ;
 Hut and hammock, man and hound :
 And above the Chayma village
 Boiled with pitch the cursed ground.

Full, and too full ; safe, and too safe ;
 Negro man, take care, take care.
 He that wantons with God’s bounties
 Of God’s wrath had best beware.

‘ For the saucy, reckless, heartless,
 Evil days are sure in store.
 You may see the Negro sinking
 As the Chayma sank of yore.’

* Mimusops. † Spondias.

§ Jatropha manihot, ‘ Cassava.’

¶ Euterpe, ‘ mountain cabbage’ palm.

†† Musa.

‡ An esculent Arum.

|| Vitis Caribæa.

** Mauritia palm.

‡‡ Pine-apple.

Loudly laughed that stalwart hunter—
 ‘Eh, what superstitious talk !
 Nyam* am nyam, an’ maney maney ;
 Birds am birds, like park am park ;
 An’ dere’s twenty thousand birdskins
 Ardered jes’ now fram New Yark.’

EVERSLEY, 1870.

HYMN †

ACCEPT this building, gracious Lord,
 No temple though it be ;
 We raised it for our suffering kin,
 And so, Good Lord, for Thee.

Accept our little gift, and give
 To all who here may dwell,
 The will and power to do their work,
 Or bear their sorrows well.

From Thee all skill and science flow ;
 All pity, care, and love,
 All calm and courage, faith and hope,
 Oh ! pour them from above.

And part them, Lord, to each and all,
 As each and all shall need,
 To rise like incense, each to Thee,
 In noble thought and deed.

And hasten, Lord, that perfect day,
 When pain and death shall cease ;
 And Thy just rule shall fill the earth
 With health, and light, and peace.

When ever blue the sky shall gleam,
 And ever green the sod ;
 And man’s rude work deface no more
 The Paradise of God.

EVERSLEY, 1870.

* Food.

† Sung by 1000 School Children at the Opening of the New Wing of the Children’s Hospital, Birmingham.

THE DELECTABLE DAY

THE boy on the famous gray pony,
Just bidding good-bye at the door,
Plucking up maiden heart for the fences
Where his brother won honor of yore.

The walk to 'the Meet' with fair children,
And women as gentle as gay,—
Ah! how do we male hogs in armor
Deserve such companions as they?

The afternoon's wander to windward,
To meet the dear boy coming back;
And to catch, down the turns of the valley,
The last weary chime of the pack.

The climb homeward by park and by moorland,
And through the fir forests again,
While the south-west wind roars in the gloaming,
Like an ocean of seething champagne.

And at night the septette of Beethoven,
And the grandmother by in her chair,
And the foot of all feet on the sofa
Beating delicate time to the air.

Ah, God! a poor soul can but thank Thee
For such a delectable day!
Though the fury, the fool, and the swindler,
To-morrow again have their way!

EVERSLEY, 6th November 1872.

JUVENTUS MUNDI

LIST a tale a fairy sent us
Fresh from dear Mundi Juventus.
When Love and all the world was young,
And birds conversed as well as sung;
And men still faced this fair creation
With humor, heart, imagination.
Who come hither from Morocco
Every spring on the sirocco?
In russet she, and he in yellow,
Singing ever clear and mellow,
'Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet you, sweet you,
Did he beat you? Did he beat you?'
Phyllopneustes wise folk call them,
But don't know what did befall them,
Why they ever thought of coming
All that way to hear gnats humming,
Why they built not nests but houses,
Like the bumble-bees and mousies.
Nor how little birds got wings,
Nor what 'tis the small cock sings—
How should they know—stupid fogies?
They daren't even believe in bogies.
Once they were a girl and boy,
Each the other's life and joy.
He a Daphnis, she a Chloe,
Only they were brown, not snowy,
Till an Arab found them playing
Far beyond the Atlas straying,
Tied the helpless things together,
Drove them in the burning weather,
In his slave-gang many a league,
Till they dropped from wild fatigue.
Up he caught his whip of hide,
Lashed each soft brown back and side
Till their little brains were burst
With sharp pain, and heat, and thirst.
Over her the poor boy lay,
Tried to keep the blows away,
Till they stiffened into clay,

And the ruffian rode away :
Swooping o'er the tainted ground,
Carrion vultures gathered round,
And the gaunt hyenas ran
Tracking up the caravan.
But—ah, wonder ! that was gone
Which they meant to feast upon.
And, for each, a yellow wren,
One a cock, and one a hen,
Sweetly warbling, flitted forth
O'er the desert toward the north.
But a shade of bygone sorrow,
Like a dream upon the morrow.
Round his tiny brainlet clinging,
Sets the wee cock ever singing,
' Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet you, sweet you,
Did he beat you ? Did he beat you ? '
Vultures croaked, and hopped, and flopped,
But their evening meal was stopped.
And the gaunt hyenas foul
Sat down on their tails to howl.
Northward towards the cool spring weather,
Those two wrens fled on together,
On to England o'er the sea,
Where all folks alike are free.
There they built a cabin, wattled
Like the huts where first they prattled,
Hatched and fed, as safe as may be,
Many a tiny feathered baby.
But in autumn south they go
Past the Straits and Atlas' snow,
Over desert, over mountain,
To the palms beside the fountain,
Where, when once they lived before, he
Told her first the old, old story.
' What do the doves say ? Curuck Coo,
You love me and I love you.'

VALENTINE'S DAY

OH! I wish I were a tiny brownny bird from out the
 south,
 Settled among the alder-holts, and twittering by the
 stream ;
 I would put my tiny tail down, and put up my tiny mouth,
 And sing my tiny life away in one melodious dream.

I would sing about the blossoms, and the sunshine and
 the sky,
 And the tiny wife I mean to have in such a cosy nest ;
 And if someone came and shot me dead, why then I
 could but die,
 With my tiny life and tiny song just ended at their
 best.

EVERSLEY, 1873.

BALLAD

LORRAINE, LORRAINE, LORRÉE

I

'ARE you ready for your steeple-chase, Lorraine, Lor-
 raine, Lorrée ?
 Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum,
 Baree,
 You're booked to ride your capping race to-day at Coul-
 terlee,
 You're booked to ride Vindictive, for all the world to see,
 To keep him straight, to keep him first, and win the run
 for me.
 Barum, Barum,' etc.

2

She clasped her new-born baby, poor Lorraine, Lorraine,
 Lorrée,
 'I cannot ride Vindictive, as any man might see,
 And I will not ride Vindictive, with this baby on my
 knee ;
 He's killed a boy, he's killed a man, and why must he
 kill me?'

3

‘Unless you ride Vindictive, Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrée,
Unless you ride Vindictive to-day at Coulterlee,
And land him safe across the brook, and win the blank
for me, [me.’
It’s you may keep your baby, for you’ll get no keep from

4

‘That husbands could be cruel,’ said Lorraine, Lorraine,
Lorrèe,
‘That husbands could be cruel, I have known for sea-
sons three ;
But oh ! to ride Vindictive while a baby cries for me,
And be killed across a fence at last for all the world to
see !’

5

She mastered young Vindictive— Oh ! the gallant lass
was she,
And kept him straight and won the race as near as near
could be ;
But he killed her at the brook against a pollard willow tree,
Oh ! he killed her at the brook, the brute, for all the world
to see,
And no one but the baby cried for poor Lorraine, Lorrèe.

Last poem written in illness.

COLORADO, U. S. A.

June, 1874.

MARTIN LIGHTFOOT'S SONG *

COME hearken, hearken, gentles all,
Come hearken unto me,
And I'll sing you a song of a Wood-Lyon
Came swimming out over the sea.

He ranged west, he ranged east,
And far and wide ranged he ;
He took his bite out of every beast
Lives under the greenwood tree.

* Supposed to be sung at Crowland Minster to Leofric, the Wake's Mass Priest, when news was received of Hereward's second marriage to Alfruda.

Then by there came a silly old wolf,
‘And I’ll serve you,’ quoth he ;
Quoth the Lyon, ‘My paw is heavy enough,
So what wilt thou do for me?’

Then by there came a cunning old fox,
‘And I’ll serve you,’ quoth he ;
Quoth the Lyon, ‘My wits are sharp enough
So what wilt thou do for me?’

Then by there came a white, white dove,
Flew off Our Lady’s knee ;
Sang ‘It’s I will be your true, true love,
If you’ll be true to me.’

‘And what will you do, you bonny white dove?
And what will you do for me?’
‘Oh, it’s I’ll bring you to Our Lady’s love,
In the ways of chivalrie.’

He followed the dove that Wood-Lyon
By mere and wood and wold,
Till he is come to a perfect knight,
Like the Paladin of old.

He rangèd east, he rangèd west,
And far and wide ranged he—
And ever the dove won him honor and fame
In the ways of chivalrie.

Then by there came a foul old sow,
Came rookling under the tree ;
And ‘It’s I will be true love to you,
If you’ll be true to me.’

‘And what wilt thou do, thou foul old sow ?
And what wilt thou do for me ?
‘Oh, there hangs in my snout a jewel of gold,
And that will I give to thee.’

He took to the sow that Wood-Lyon ;
To the rookling sow took he ;
And the dove flew up to Our Lady’s bosom ;
And never again throve he.

THE END.

Kingsley, Charles
The heroes

